


THE
Present State
OF
CHINA.

*A Letter to my Lord PONTCHARTRAIN,
Secretary of State to his Most Christian
Majesty,*

The Voyage from Siam to Peking.

My Lord,

H O' travellers at their return are very fond of telling their story, and I am pretty well assured, that a relation from China cannot fail of being at once both useful and entertaining, yet I could never once resolve upon writing a formal account of my voyage thither. That subject, indeed, is worn so thread bare, that people have little or no curiosity after new relations, and the world, moreover, is sufficiently taken up with the business of the times the wars, negotiations, and designs now carrying on in Europe, divert them from enquiring into the affairs of remote countries

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But you, my lord (whose understanding is as extensive as your zeal, and who no less rejoice at victories obtain'd by Christ's doctrine over idolatry, than at those by our arms) will, I dare hope, give us his ministers a patient hearing. I have already had the honour to be heard by you on this subject at leisure hours; and I may say, that next to those divine helps which support us in all our labours, nothing could more animate our industry, than that goodness with which you are pleased to give it encouragement.

The project of sending missionaries, skill'd in the mathematicks, into the utmost parts of the world, was thought so glorious to his majesty's reign, and so advantageous to religion, that his ministers have ever used their best endeavours to promote it.

Monsieur Colbert not only obtain'd his majesty's approbation, but also his orders for the preparing necessary instruments, for a considerable number of mathematicians, bound for China; some thro' Muscovy and Tartary, others thro' Syria and Persia, and the rest on board the vessels belonging to the East-India company.

His death put some stop to this great design, but the marquis de Louvois no sooner succeeded him, as superintendent of arts and sciences, than by order from his majesty he commanded our superiors to look out men, whose zeal and capacity render'd them able for such an undertaking; and for them he procur'd all sorts of instruments, together with money, letters of commendation, and, in a word, whatever might contribute to the success of the design.

Monsieur De Seignelay, judging that these new missions needed the support of the admiralty, desired they might be intrusted to his care; but tho' Monsieur De Louvois gave up to him the manage-
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ment of them; yet he did not wholly abandon them, but largely and bountifully contributed to the shortening their journey thro' Poland, Russia, Siberia, and the greater Tartary to the eastern ocean.

Thus, my lord, has providence led three great men to forward so noble a work, the perfecting of which it has left to you. The several reasons which induced them to it will, doubtless, be as prevalent with your lordship, who are no less desirous of the honour of religion, the glory of our king, and the advantage of his subjects, and no less careful in your employments, with respect both to arts and sciences, and trade and navigation.

Your protection has, hitherto, been so benevolent to those zealous missionaries, that they cannot doubt of a happy success.

But besides this acknowledgment, they are bound to give you an exact account of their actions, their travels, and the use they have made of his majesty's bounty. These memoirs, my lord, I offer to you on their behalf.

The king, about ten years since, commanded six of his subjects, jesuits, for China, with the character of his majesty's mathematicians, that, by teaching these sciences, they might take occasion to promote the gospel. I was one of them, and set sail with the rest in the beginning of the year 1685, in the same ship, on board which was monsieur Chaumont, sent by his majesty on an extraordinary embassy to the court of Siam.

Our voyage thither was very fortunate; but the season forbade our going farther, and we were detained there near a twelve-month, till the time of year proper for our design.

The king of Siam, a pretender to astrology, desired to be a sharer in our astronomical observations. He, above all, admired our exactness in fore-

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telling an eclipse of the moon, which led him to entertain thoughts of keeping us at his court. But having inform'd him, what our orders were, he consented that four of us should depart for China, provided father Tachard should return to France, to request the king for more mathematicians, and that I in the interim should remain with him.

Accordingly he went for Europe, and I continued at Siam, while the fathers Fontaney Gerbillion, DeVissdelon, and Bouvet took ship for Macao, a small city, situated on the point of an island on the coasts of China, where the Portuguese have a fortress.

Father Tachard arrived safe at Paris, with the Siamite ambassadors: but those, who sailed for China, were, in a few days after their departure, surpris'd by a tempest which put a stop to their voyage; they were in a stout vessel of monsieur Constance's, but it suffered so much in the storm, that in a little time it began to be leaky.

The shipwreck being inevitable, it was thought better to strand on the shore with some hopes of life, than by loosing up against the wind to keep the sea, and founder in a desperate condition; so before night they reached an unknown land. The ship often run upon shoals, but did not split, and with much difficulty, they got to the leeward of an island near Cassomet, a province of the kingdom of Siam, bordering upon that of Camboja.

The captain then despaired of proceeding in his voyage, being fallen under a wind, which according to the season was like to keep the same corner for several months, and hindered him from doubling the cape of Camboja, especially since the ship was extremely disabled.

The missionaries more concerned at the loss of time, than the danger they had escaped, resolved upon returning to Siam by land, designing there to go on board an English vessel bound for Canton, which was to sail about the beginning of August. They entered the woods, in hopes of meeting with a town and some guides to conduct them, but they soon lost their way, and encountered no less perils at land than before at sea. The great rains had caused a land flood, so that, walking barefoot thro' the fields which were overflowed, an unnumerable quantity of leeches, and musketoes so troublesome to strangers, were their continual torment. On the other hand a great number of serpents, tigers, buffies, and elephants, of which the forests are full, kept them under continual apprehensions.

But their greatest misery was want of food, for, the little victuals they had brought out with them being soon spent, they must have been starved, had not providence directed them to a small village. Not that the inhabitants could afford them much relief, being themselves unprovided of all things, but they conducted them back again to their ship, where they arrived after a fortnight's wandering, half dead with weariness and hunger.

As for me, I was almost in as ill a condition. I had prevailed upon monsieur Coûstance to place me in a convent of Talapoms (so their priests are called) of whom not one had yet embraced christianity, tho' their conversion might be an effectual means to bring about that of the whole nation. I knew no steps more proper to be taken, to this purpose, than free conversation with them, and conforming my self to their dresses, and austerity of life. This method proved effectual at Madura, from whence I concluded, that there was no less reason to expect the like success at Siam. But the conspiracy of the

Malais and Macassars, which happened at that time, gave monsieur Constance so much trouble, that he had no leisure to think of me. The king who countenanced the christian faith, and his minister, who was its chief support, with all those who professed it, were in danger of being murdered in one night; but our Redeemer saved us from that peril; but the plot was discovered, and the criminals brought to a condign punishment.

On account of this accident, the fathers returned by sea to Siam, before I was very far engaged in the new life I resolved to lead; and at their earnest solicitation I consented to embark with them, when the season should permit; and the more willingly, because it was about the time that father Tachard was to return with a recruit of missionaries and mathematicians.

On the 17th of June, in the year 1687, we sailed for Nimpo, a considerable city and haven in Chekiam, a province of Macao; for we thought it improper to go to Macao, as was designed the year before, having been informed, that the Portuguese would not afford us a welcome reception.

I hardly believe, my lord, that you are over curious of knowing how we steered our course. Journals wholly made up of east, west, north, and south, and a thousand barbarous words, which seem only proper for huffing and hectoring the winds, can scarce be relish'd by so nice a palate as yours; which nevertheless are very useful to seamen, and those, who make navigation their study, would not find such a stile unpleasant. But I shall take another opportunity of giving you an account of it, in offering you some geographical memoirs. Permit me then to wave this for the present, and to speak only of what concerned ourselves,

Altho'

Altho' the king of Siam gave exprefs orders for our good treatment, God was pleas'd in his wisdom to give us an occasion of exercising our patience.* We were on board a small Chinese vessel, called a *Somme* by the Portuguese, without any shelter against the weather, and so streightened for want of room, that we could not lie at length; placed near an idol, black with the smoak of a lamp continually burning in its honour, and, which did not a little offend us, worshipped every day with a diabolical superstition. The sun was directly over our heads, and we had scarce any water to quench our immoderate thirst, which the excessive heat of the climate brought upon us. Three meals of rice were our daily allowance, tho' the captain, I confess, often invited us to eat some meat with him; but that being always first offered as a sacrifice to the idol, we looked on it rather with horror than appetite. In this manner we spent above a month, endeavouring, by our patience and prayers, to inspire those idolatrous people with an esteem for our holy religion, our small acquaintance with their language not permitting us to do it by declaring its most sacred truths.

'Tis true, we sometimes, with the help of an interpreter, attempted to convince them of the absurdity of that worship they were unfortunately engaged in, by means of their education. One day especially they flocked about us; the dispute grew sharp, and, at length, so hot, that we were constrained to drop it. All seamen are generally very obstinate; and ours took great offence at what we had said of their idol, and, soon after, advanced towards us, with threatening aspects, armed with lances and half-pikes.

We impatiently expected the event, but found, at last, there was no reason to fear. The mariners had

armed themselves only to prepare for a procession, in honour of their idol; perhaps to appease the anger she might have conceived at the rude treatment which she received from us in the late dispute. I scarce believe there is a nation more superstitious than the Chinese, who worship the very compass they steer by, continually censuring it with perfumes, and often offering it meat as a sacrifice. Twice a day regularly they threw little pieces of gilt paper, like money, into the sea, as it were to keep it at their devotion. Sometimes they would present it with little boats made of the same stuff, that, being employed in tossing and ruining them, she might have no leisure to annoy us. But when the unruly element slighted this kindness, and became troublesome, being, as they believed, agitated in an extraordinary manner by a Dæmon that governs it; they burned some feathers, whose noisome smoak and pestiferous scent were, indeed, more than sufficient, to send the fiend going, were he the cause, had he been endowed with sense.

Passing once near a hill on which one of their temples is built, their superstition then out-did itself, for, besides the usual ceremonies, consisting in meat-offerings, burning of candles and perfumes, throwing little baubles of gilt paper into the sea, and infinite other trumperies, all hands were at work, for five or six hours together, in making a little vessel, in the likeness of ours, of about four feet in length. It was very artificially wrought, wanting neither masts, tackling, sails, nor flags; it had its compass, rudder, and shalop, its arms, kitchen-stuff, victuals, cargo, and book of accompts. Besides, they had daubed as many small pieces of paper, as we were men in the ship, and disposed of them in our places. This machine, being placed on two slaves, was, with great ceremony, at the

noise

noise of a tabor and a brazen bason, raised up in view of all the crew. A seaman, in a Bonze's habit, was the principal person among them, playing several apish tricks with a quarter-staff, and, now and then, shouting forth loud huzza's. At length the mysterious toy was committed to the waves, and cy'd as far as sight could reach, accompanied with the Bonze's acclamations, who roared with all his might. This ridiculous entertainment diverted the sailors, while we were struck with a sensible grief to behold their blind error, which it was out of our power to remove.

An accident happened soon after, which, at first, gave them less pleasure, but, in the end, proved an equal diversion to us all. The mariners imagined they saw a ship in a part of the sea much infested with pyrates. They had excellent spying-glasses, thro' which they could perceive the masts and sails; nay, some saw the very tackling, and, from the manner of her sailing, it was plain she designed us a visit. All were very diligent in putting their ship in a posture of defence: the Chinese, who, of all men, love best to sleep in a whole skin, were in extreme consternation; we saw fear painted in their faces, while they made ready their scymeters, pikes, and guns, for they had no cannon. This terrified us more than the fancied enemy, which yet caused us no little apprehension; for I must ingenuously own, we were then grown as fearful, if possible, as the Chinese themselves. Religion or martyrdom was not then the thing in question; we were in danger of being strangled by villains, who give no quarter, according to their custom, which they would hardly have altered for our sakes. The only remedy would have been, to have leaped into the sea, and, by drowning ourselves, deferred our end for a few minutes; but the medicine was somewhat violent,

violent, and we did not care to try the experiment. Our prospective-glasses were often used, and, to our great surprize, the mighty vessel, as it came near us, lessened, as did our ill-grounded terror, for we now doubted whether it was a ship. At length it grew a floating island, then a sea-horse, and then I know not what, till at last it came in view, and proved to be a tree, which a violent wind had torn from the coast. The earth and pebbles about its root occasioned it to swim upright, so that its trunk, which was very high, resembled a mast, and some branches spread on each side for a yard, with lesser boughs broken down for ropes, had, with the help of the wind and the sea's beating about it, which formed a tract not unlike that of a ship, thus causelessly alarmed us, moreover, people who trembled, as they looked thro' their glasses, might easily be deceived.

The dreadful enemy was no sooner known, but the preparations were given over, to their great seeming grief, who then desired nothing more than a battle, and were heartily vexed at the disappointment. But we much suspecting their courage was counterfeit, since it did not appear till all the danger was vanished, thought not ourselves safe until we were landed.

This was not the only peril we were likely to encounter; for we were scarce in sight of Emous, an island of China, famous for the commodiousness of its harbour, and the abundance of ships of all nations resorting thither, when the sudden veering of the wind, followed by a calm, and black clouds, which on every side darkened our horizon, caused the pilots to fear the approach of some Typhon, than which nothing is more terrible in the seas of China and Japan, for, unless the captain be skilful, the crew numerous, and the vessel stout, their ruin is most

- most certain. This Typhon is a furious wind, or rather a blowing of all the winds at once; so that the waves, confusedly rolling one upon another, beset a ship on all sides, and toss it with the utmost rage and fury. This wind is so violent, that there is no bearing any sail; and so obstinate, that the third day scarce sees the end of it. At first the seamen's pains and industry may a little withstand the storm, but continual labour tires and disheartens them; they yield to the over-ruling winds, the masts break,
- the rudder is carried off, and the ship founders; or, if she be so well built as to sustain the fury of the waves, she splits against a rock, and not a man escapes.
- Four days had been spent, in expectation of the like fate; and the dreadful omens increased, when it came into our minds to address St. Francis Xavier, whose miracles had once rendered those seas so famous. We prayed him to divert the tempest, and enforced our prayers by a vow. Scarce were we off our knees, but, whether by a miracle, or ~~the~~ ordinary course of nature, there blew a favourable gale of wind, which carried us thro' some islands into our desired port.

I never saw any thing so frightful, as that infinite number of rocks and desert islands thro' which we were obliged to pass. The channels are in some places so narrow, as not to exceed ten paces in breadth, to the great danger of those who sail thro' them: we also steer'd thro' a pretty wide bay, in which the Chinese observe a profound silence, for fear, they tell us, of disturbing a neighbouring dragon; we were constrained to follow their example. I know not how they call it; as for us, we named it the Dumb Man's Bay.

Having spent some time among those horrid rocks, we at last had sight of a little city called Tim-hai, that is, Sea's Limit, situated at the mouth
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of the river, up which we tided, and dropp'd anchor three miles higher, near the city of Nimpo, which we had earnestly longed to see, during a six and thirty days yoyage, rendered extremely tedious, on account of the dangers and hardships to which we were daily exposed

It was with transporting joy we reached that land, in which we had, during so many years, ardently desired to preach the gospel. The sight of it inspired us with an unusual zeal, and the joy of viewing that happy soil, which so many good men had consecrated by their labours, we thought an ample amends for ours.

However, it was not so easy to enter, tho' we were so near the city. China is a very ceremonious country, wherein all strangers, but especially the French, have occasion for a good stock of patience. The captain of our vessel thought fit to conceal us, and, on our arrival, we were let down into the hold, where the heat, which increased the nearer we approached the land, and several other inconveniencies, rendered our condition almost insupportable. But, in spite of all precaution, we were discovered, an officer of the customs spied us, and, having taken an account of the ship's cargo, set a man in her, and withdrew to inform his master. This Mandarin who holds his commission immediately from court, and is therefore much respected, ordered us to be brought before him, whom we found in a large hall, assisted by his assessors, and other inferior officers, we were waited on thither by a multitude of people, who are there more curious of seeing an European, than we should be here of viewing a Chinese.

No sooner were we enter'd, but we were admonished to kneel, and bow our heads nine times to the ground, that being the custom in those parts of doing obeisance to the prime Mandarin, who, in that quality, represents the emperor's person. His countenance

tenance was very severe, bearing a gravity that challenged veneration, and a dread, which increased at the sight of his executioners, who, like Roman lictors, attended with chains and great sticks, in a readiness to bind and cudgel whom his Mandarinship pleased

Having paid him our duty, he asked us who we were, and what was our errand. *My Lord* (answered we, by the means of our interpreter) *we have heard in Europe, that several of our brethren, and particularly father Verbiest, laboured with success to spread the knowledge of our holy religion in these remote parts, the same zeal has moved us, and the noble idea we have form'd of this empire, and of the wit and politeness of its inhabitants, has engaged us to procure them the only thing that is wanting to complete the grandeur of so flourishing and renowned a nation, viz the knowledge of THE ONLY TRUE GOD, without which it cannot be truly great. We have besides understood how kind his imperial majesty has been to them, and hope his Mandarines, who are no strangers to his intentions, will be so favourable as not to molest us*

This declaration seemed somewhat bold, in a province where our religion was scarce tolerated, and in a city where there was not one christian. But our ignorance her-of inclined us to think, that, since the freedom of trade had been granted, strangers might come and settle there, which is directly opposite to the laws of the land. The Mandarin, who, questionless, was surprized at our freedom of speech, dissembled his thoughts, and, as if he approved of our zeal, told us it was true, the emperor had a particular esteem for father Verbiest, whose merit was notorious in all parts of the empire, and that he himself was very desirous to serve us, but,

continued

continued he, *I must first advise with the governor, and we shall consider of it together: in the meanwhile return to your ship, where you shall bear farther from us.*

Some days after the general of the militia in and about the city, consisting of about fifteen or twenty thousand men, was willing to see us, and entertained us in a most obliging manner, in so much that, when we left him to wait upon the governor, he sent an officer to desire him that he would use us kindly, assuring him we were very honest people. The governor expressed some regard for us, but said he could determine nothing in our case, till he had first conferred with the chief officers of the city; so that we were forced again on board our hated ship, which seemed to us an extremely severe prison.

Most of us were sick, but our lord, who permitted these delays, to try our patience, did at last soften the hardened hearts of these infidels, who took compassion upon us. Eight days being spent in consultations, the Mandarin of the customs held his court in a house not far from the port, where his clerks usually kept their office. Having there sent for us and our goods, being several bales of books, images, and mathematical instruments, they opened but three of our trunks, without demanding any custom; and his lordship told us, we might lodge in the suburbs till they had heard from the viceroy, to whom the governor had wrote concerning us. We thankfully accepted of his civility, and, in our new habitation, enjoyed a rest we greatly wanted.

Permit me, my lord, before I proceed, to give you a general description of that great empire, framed according to the observations of ancient geographers, and rectified by those we have since made with much care and exactness.

CHINA, which the inhabitants call Tchoum-coevé, the middle kingdom, because they formerly thought themselves seated in the midst of the world, is divided into fifteen very large provinces Quantum, Fokien, Chekiam, Nankim, Xantum and Peking lie along the eastern ocean, from south to north; and, from north to south on the western side, are extended Xansi, Xensi, Suchun, Yunnan and Quamsi, and then Queycheu, Kiansi, Huquam and Honan are encompassed by the other eleven, and from the midst of the empire, which a channel divides from Japan and the island Formosa, and a very long wall from Tartary

• Here, my lord, I must intreat your patience a while, to give you an exact account of its situation, and remind you of two considerable faults geographers are guilty of the first whereof is, that they have misplaced the whole province Leaotum within the wall, whereas it is undoubtedly without, tho' it ever made part of the Chinese dominions. This is matter of fact, and whoever disputes it need only take a journey thither, as we did, to be fully convinced The second is, that they place the whole empire five hundred leagues more eastward than it really is, this is not so palpable a mistake as the former, but clearly demonstrable by our observations, so that China is much nearer Europe than it has been hitherto imagined

If succeeding observers could but bring it each journey so many leagues nearer, our voyages would soon be shortened, and those, who are so fond of seeing unknown countries, might with ease satisfy their desires; but the mischief is, that it is out of their power And I dare say, our observations, and those of the royal academy of sciences, will scarce be surpassed, unless Mr V—, who has so much weighed against our manner of proceeding herein, undertakes that

that difficult task; then indeed I should not despair, if he gives us a map of his travels, of seeing China beyond Japan, or Japan near Mexico.

Besides these two fundamental errors, they have failed in the situation of each particular city; but a fuller account would be too tedious to insert here, and may besides be expected from father Gouye, a mathematician of our king's college, with whom I have left our geographical observations, which he will shortly produce to the world. However, my lord, be pleased that I give you the true extent of the empire: From the city of Canton, which we place a little above the 23d degree to Peking, which lies in the 40th, there are from north to south 17 degrees; but we may reckon 18, because beyond Peking and Canton to the utmost bounds is 20 leagues more: These 18 degrees amount to 450 common leagues, and are the intire length of that country. Its extent from east to west is little less; so that on the whole China which is almost of a circular figure, is very near fourteen hundred leagues in circuit. This account, my lord, I can warrant to be just, and grounded on very exact observation.

You see, my lord, that I have taken no notice of Formosa, Haynan, and other islands of inferior note, which of themselves would make a very great kingdom; as also all the province of Leaotum, because it is without the wall. As for the Corea, Tumkin, and Siam, they depend, I confess, so far on China as that they pay tribute to that crown, and their kings, at their admission, are confirmed by its emperor; but they are separate kingdoms, and exceedingly differ from that of China, which is quite another thing, whether we consider the product and fertility of its soil, the beauty and numbers of its cities, or the wit, politeness, religion, and manners of its inhabitants. The Chinese know it, and are so proud

mote from court. Great numbers of malecontents flock'd about him, who having made themselves masters of the greatest cities, like a torrent, overflow'd the whole country, driving all down before them.

The sacred presence of their emperor could not save Pekin from their fury ; the rebel, who knew the best forces were drawn out of it, marched directly to attack it. There was indeed a garrison of seventy thousand men, but most gain'd upon by the practices of L I's emissaries ; so that while some with a pretended zeal persuaded the prince to remain in his palace, others opened the city gates to the traitor, who solemnized his entry by a cruel slaughter. The unfortunate monarch, finding himself betrayed, would have marched out against him with six hundred guards, who still remained with him, but at the mentioning of his heroick proposal their hearts failed them, and they basely abandoned him. Then fearing no greater evil than that of falling quick into the hands of his enemies, he retired into a garden with an only daughter he had, and having wrote with his blood these words on the border of his vest, *My subjects have basely forsaken me, spend thy rage on my body, but spare my people.* He first stabbed the princess, whose tears would have softened a heart of flint, and then hang'd himself on a tree ; more unjust to his daughter, and cruel to himself, than could have been the most barbarous foe.

The emperor being dead, all bowed to the usurper, except Ousanguay (whom the late prince had intrusted with the command of the forces he had sent against the Tartars) and he never would acknowledge him, and chose rather to pull down his tyranny, than ignobly to accept of a share in it. The new monarch having in vain besieged him in the province of Leaotum, to engage him to surrender

render himself, shewed him his father loaded with irons, protesting he would put him to death in his sight; if he did not immediately submit. But that generous lord, more faithful to the memory of his deceased prince than tender of his father's life, suffered the duty of a subject to prevail over that of a son; and seeing that blood spilt, of which his was once a part, resolved to die, or revenge at once his father's and his emperor's death. He made his peace with the Tartar, who, having joined him, no sooner enabled him to cope with his enemy, but he marched against him. But the tyrant, whose cowardise was even greater than his cruelty, durst not appear against those two armies. He fled to Peking, where having burned the palace, and all that had not perished at his first entry, he retired into the province of Xensi, loaded with the spoil of the empire and the curse of all. He was pursued but in vain, for he met with so private a retirement, that all the art of man could never find him out.

In the mean while the Tartars entered Peking, and so imposed upon the poor Chinese, that of themselves they begged their new guests to take care of their distressed state. The Tartars were too cunning not to improve so favourable an opportunity; hereupon they, either by force or policy, are since grown absolute masters of it. And here it is hard to determine which is the most to be wondered at, the courage and conduct of that nation, which gave them success in so noble an enterprize, or the supineness or ill management of the Chinese, who thus basely submitted to a people so inconsiderable for their number, that they would have been ashamed not long before to own them for their subjects. So true it is we ought not to look on any thing as beneath us, since all tem-

poral grandeur is subject to change, and nothing is constant in this world but inconstancy.

The Tartarian king Tsoutè had not the leisure to enjoy his conquest; scarce had he taken possession but he died, leaving the administration of the government, and care of his son, who was then but six years old, to his brother. This brother of his, named AMAVAN, conquered all the provinces which had not yet submitted; a prince deservedly admired, not only for his valour and conduct, ever attended with success, but also for his fidelity and moderation. For the young prince being come to age, he discharged his trust, and took as much care to secure him in the empire, as he had done to conquer it for him.

- This union of the two nations has made one empire of a prodigious extent, for tho' all Tartary does not belong to China, yet most is tributary to it; insomuch, that the great and mighty CHAM, to whom the Chinese themselves sometime paid tribute, is now fallen from all his grandeur. But I do not wonder how we in Europe could be misinformed in this point, since Monsieur Constance himself, who so frequently conversed with them, knew no better. I know not upon what grounds he had credulously taken up a report that Tartary obeyed one sole emperor, from whom the Chinese defended themselves only by presents and money. This will make me take more care for the future, how I credit relations which are grounded on common fame.

Since the peace between Russia and China, it is easy to give the true length of the whole empire, for on that occasion the bounds were fixed by consent to the 55th degree, the rest of the land stretching from north to east remaining still undecided by that treaty. So from the most southerly point of
Hay-

Haynan to the utmost limits of that part of Tartary, which belongs to the emperor of China, may be reckon'd above 900 leagues. Those lands are not alike fruitful, but all may yield religion a plentiful harvest, and, were all the missionaries in the world employ'd in so vast a field, it would yet want for reapers.

We were well informed at Nimpo of the good we could do there, and were ready to take a spiritual possession of the promised land, when we had intelligence that the viceroy of that province was much offended that we were suffered to land, and was resolved to send us back to the Indies. He wrote indeed a sharp reprimand to the governor of Nimpo, and at the same time an account of what had passed to the grand tribunal at Peking, which is entrusted with the care of foreign affairs, and ever was averse to the christian religion. He was very partial, for tho' he was well acquainted with our design, he represented us as five Europeans, who for some private ends designed to settle there, in opposition to the fundamental laws of the realm, so that the court decreed we should be banished, and, according to custom, presented an order to that effect, desiring the emperor to sign it.

Had this order been confirmed, we had been undone, and in all probability, the Mandarins at Nimpo had been so too, for treating us so favourably. The viceroy, who bore us great a love to our money as he did hatred to our belief, would have seized our bales, and, as a punishment on the captain of our ship, confiscated his merchandizes, and ordered him forthwith to be gone, and take us along with him; and if the captain had been run'd on our account, we might reasonably look to be thrown over board by him.

Our peril was certain, had we not prevented it by our care in writing, as we were in duty bound,

22 *The Voyage from Siam to Peking.*

to father Intorcetta, an Italian missionary, and father general of our order in those parts. Father Fontaney had also given father Verbieft notice of our arrival, desiring him that he would instruct us what we had to do. The father had all the reason in the world to leave us to ourselves, for, by taking us under his protection, he exposed himself to the anger of the viceroy of *Goa*, and the governor of *Macao*, from whom he had received letters which were neither conformable to the king of Portugal's intentions, nor to christian charity. But who could have expected that a man, ever ready to sacrifice his life for the infidels salvation, should have looked unconcernedly on, while his brethren, who were come from the remotest parts of the earth to assist him in his task, miserably perished? When he received our letters the emperor was in Tartary, so that he was forced to write to a friend at court, that he would inform his majesty of our arrival, and caused his letter, by a wilful mistake, to be put into a packet which he knew would be delivered into the emperor's own hands. It happened as he desired, the emperor opened it and read it, so that being well informed of all the truth, when the tribunal's order was delivered to him, he answered, that he would consider it when he returned to *Pekin*; which he did after he had hunted a fortnight. That court was surprised at the delay, it being customary for the prince, in three days time, either to sign or cancel these kind of writs. Father Verbieft was no less impatient to know the fate of his letter and the emperor's resolutions, and as for us, we endeavoured by our prayers to obtain his favour, who rules the hearts of kings.

Father Intorcetta, our superior, who best knew our ill circumstances, did, by publick prayers in his church

church at Hamcheu, beg God to deliver us out of them, and firmly believing, that the cry of innocent babes is very prevalent with the divine Majesty, gathered all the christians children from six to ten, together into the church, where lying prostrate on the ground, they unanimously lifted up their innocent hands to heaven, saying, * *Pour out thine indignation, O Lord, upon the heathen that have not known thee, and upon the kingdoms that have not called upon thy name, but defend those who worship thee, and deliver not unto their enemies thy servants, who come hither from the extremities of the world, to confess thy holy name, and to shew forth thy praise* These prayers were accompanied with the tears of the whole congregation, especially with those of father Intorcetta, who having been so happy as to suffer chains, prisons and banishment for his Saviour's sake, was most fit to obtain the blessing we begged for

The emperor was no sooner returned to Peking, but father Verbiest informed him that we were his brethren, who, by our skill in the mathematicks, might be useful to his majesty To which he answered, *If it was so, he saw no cause why he should expel us out of his dominions* He summoned his privy council, to which the princes of the blood are admitted, and with their advice and consent decreed we should all be honourably sent for to court. An order to that effect was sent to the Lapou (the same tribunal which had presented the writ against us) and by them transmitted to the viceroy of Hamcheu so that by an especial providence, he, who had endeavour'd to turn us shamefully out of China, was himself obliged to introduce us, and that with more advantage, than,

C 4

lud

* *Efunde iram tuam in Gentes quæ te non noverunt, Ps 58
Ne trahas animas confectas sub, Psal. 73.*

had he been our friend; he could have procured us. His vexation was the greater, because, without doing us any harm, he had run the risque of incurring the emperor's displeasure by his false informations. It was indeed no little mortification to him; and it was a fortnight before he would acquaint us with our good fortune.

In the mean while the stay we made at Nimpo gave us an opportunity of improving our acquaintance with the Mandarin. Some sent us presents, others invited us to their houses, and all in general were very kind to us. We endeavoured to make use of this opportunity for their conversion from idolatry, but it is hard for souls wholly buried in flesh and blood, to savour the things which are of God. However, the governor of the city made one step towards it, which gave us great hopes; it was this:

They had for five months time been afflicted with a continual drought, so that their rivers, and the channels they cut out into their land to water it, were now quite dry, and a famine much apprehended. The priests had offered numberless sacrifices, and the Mandarin. left nothing undone which they thought might appease the anger of the gods. They had often asked us what methods we used in Europe in such cases; and being answered, that by humiliation, penitence, and the fervency of our prayers we moved Heaven to compassion, they hoped by the like means to procure their idols pity; but alas! they call'd upon *gods that have ears and cannot hear*: at last the governor was tired with his frequent disappointments, and resolved to worship the only God, whom all nature obeys. Having understood that in our house we had a pretty handsome chappel, in which we every day celebrat'd the sacred mysteries of our religion, he sent to us to know if we
 L . . . would

would permit him to come in state, and join his prayers with ours. We answered, we desired nothing more than that he should worship as we did, and that all the city would follow his example; and assured him moreover, that, if he begged with faith and sincerity, he should undoubtedly obtain. We presently went to work to put our chappel in order, and make all things ready to solemnize his coming, when to our great surprize his secretary came to tell us, that his lord would be with us the next day very early, being necessitated to meet at eight the same morning at a neighbouring hill, where with some Mandarines he was to offer a sacrifice to a dragon. In answer to this unexpected message, we ordered our interpreter to wait on him, and make him sensible, that the christians God was a jealous God, who would not allow of his paying to any others the honours due to himself alone; that his gods were statues or creatures that had no power to help themselves nor him; and that we humbly craved him to despise those idle fancies, fit only to amuse the credulous senseless vulgar, but far beneath a man of his sense and merit; and to trust in the only God of heaven, whom his reason alone must convince him to be the true one. I really believe he was almost persuaded, but he had engaged himself to the Mandarines, and for some worldly respect durst not break his promise; so he worshipped his idols, whom, doubtless, he had no faith in, and withdrew from the only true God, of whose being he was inwardly convinced.

Then, my lord, moved with indignation at their blindness and the devil's tyranny, some of us thought of imitating what St. Francis Xavier had done on some like occasion, by erecting a cross in the city under these conditions: First, that we would prevail

prevail with Heaven to grant the rain they stood in such want of: and secondly, that if we did, they should pull down their idols, and own that God who should have been so favourable, as to grant them their request. Our minds were different, as was our zeal: some full of lively faith, which the miraculous and continual support of providence, thro' the several perils we had encounter'd, had inspired them with, could not question the success of so bold, but holy an undertaking: others not so zealous, but persuaded that prudence ought to be our guide, where the inspiration is not evident; were of opinion nothing should be hazarded which failing might expose our religion. So we were content to mourn within ourselves, and beg of God not only that he would give them rain, but that celestial fire also, which our Saviour hath brought into the world, and desires all nations may be inflamed with.

While we were thus busied in promoting the interest of our religion, the viceroy was no less in thinking how to execute the orders he had received from court. He left our journey, as far as Hamcheu, to the governor's care, who provided boats for us, and commanded an inferior Mandarin to attend us, that we might lack for nothing. We performed it in five days time, without meeting with any of those accidents which strangers there are subject to when they are thought to carry things of value with them. The christians at Hamcheu were lavish in the expressions of their affection to us. They came in crowds to the river, whence we were carried as in triumph to their church, with more kindness perhaps than politeness. For they had, unknown to father Intorcetta, provided for each of us an elbow-chair, borne by four men, and attended by as many, into

into which we were forced to suffer ourselves to be set, not knowing what they meant, for our little skill in their language did not permit us to learn it from themselves. Having locked us in, we were forced to make our entry as they would have it, which was in this manner. A musick of ten or twelve hands with some trumpets led the van, next came some horse and foot, the former bearing several standards and flags, and the latter armed with lances and pikes, and next to these four officers who supported a large board varnished with red, on which these words were written in large golden characters, *Doctors of the heavenly law, sent for to court*. We came in the rear, surrounded by a throng of christians and Gentiles, whom the novelty of the show had drawn thither. In this uneasy pomp we went thro' the whole city, being a long league in length, vexed that we had not foreseen their indiscretion, and resolved to reprimand them for it. Father Intorcetta waited for us at the church-door, whence he carried us to the altar. There having nine times bowed ourselves to the ground, and returned thanks to the good God, who thro' so many hazards had, in spite of our enemies, brought us to the promised land, we returned to the chief of the christians. We desired the father to acquaint them, that we were not unthankful for their love, nor ill satisfied with their zeal for God's glory, but that the splendid manner, in which they had received us, was no ways conformable to a christian's humility: *That the heathen might, indeed, celebrate their triumphs with such earthly pomps and mundane vanities, but that a christian's glorying was in the name of the Lord*. They returned no answer, but all on their knees implored our blessing.

bleſſing. Their fervency accompanied with a meek and devout look, in which the Chineſe do, when they will, exceed all other nations, wholly diſarmed our wrath; we wept for joy and compaſſion; and I proteſt, my lord, that one moment made us a large amends for all the troubles we had undergone.

But how great was our bliſs when we were at liberty to receive the careſſes of father Intorcetta, whom God had made uſe of to procure our admittance into that empire. We already bore him a veneration due to the glorious name of confeſſor, which his imprifonment and ſufferings at *Peking* had intituled him to; but his goodneſs, meekneſs, and charity entirely won our hearts and made us reſpect him, as the true pattern of a perfect miſſionary. The character we bore of perſons ſent for to court, a character no leſs than that of envoy, obliged us to viſit and be viſited by the chief Mandarines. The viceroy our enemy was aſhamed to ſee us; he ſent us word, that thro' the multitude of buſineſs he had then on his hands, he could not find leiſure to wait upon us: but the general of the Tartars received us with all civility, and, among other demonſtrations of his kindneſs, made us a very conſiderable preſent.

However, when we were going, the viceroy, who was afraid leſt he ſhould be informed againſt, ſent ſome chairs to carry us to the imperial barge provided for us; he ordered ſome trumpets and hautboys to attend us, preſented us with ten piſtoles, and gave us an eſpecial order from court intituled a *Cam-ho*, in purſuance to which all places we paſſed thro' were to find us boats well manned, while we went by water, or ſix, two or more porters in caſe the ſeaſon obliged us to go by land, and each city to give us about half a piſtole, the ſame being

all that belonged to the emperor, and watching for the Mandarines safety, who themselves did so for that of the state. Then he descended into particulars of all the accidents they were liable to, fire, thieves, and storms, exhorting them to be vigilant, and telling them they were responsible for all the mischief which might happen. They answered each paragraph with a shout, and then retired to their watch-house; only one centry was left there, who continually struck two sticks one against another, and was hourly relieved by others, who made the same noise, that we might know they did not fall asleep, which we would gladly have permitted them to do, on condition we might have done so ourselves. But this is the custom when any Mandarin travels by water.

How uneasy soever all these ceremonies might be, I must confess that I never met with any way of travelling less tiresome than this; for after thirteen days voyage we arrived at Yamcheu, on January the third, as fresh as if we had not stirred out of our house. There we found father Aleonisa, a Franciscan, subvicar to the bishop of Basilea, and father Gahani, a jesuit, who were come thus far to meet us; the one from the bishop to proffer us that prelate's assistance, and the other by his credit and experience, to make the rest of our journey as easy as he could. Both knew we had letters of commendation from the king, and were willing to shew us all the respect due to those who are under his majesty's protection. * This was not the only civility we received from them, for they have since obliged us so highly, that we never can enough express our gratitude.

Here the frost forced us to leave the great canal, and we had horses found for our men, and porters for our goods. As for ourselves, the great cold

cold and snow, which we were unaccustomed to, made us choose to go in litters, some of our horsemen riding about us that we might be the more secure. We shifted our porters at each city or big town; and, which is very strange, we could get above a hundred, with as much speed and ease, as in France we might five or six. The cold increased hourly, and became at last so violent, that we found the river Hoamho, one of the greatest in China, almost frozen over; a whole day was spent in breaking the ice, and we passed with no small trouble and danger. We left Nimpo on the 27th of November, 1687, and arrived at Peking the 8th of February following; but we rested so often by the way, that indeed we had not spent above a month and an half in our journey.

These honours paid us by so potent a prince, and the good success of so long and perillous a voyage, together with a prospect of the benefit our religion might reap by it, would have occasioned in us a well-grounded joy, had not our thoughts been cruelly diverted from it. Scarce were we in sight of Peking, but we received the most afflicting news of father Verbiest's death. It struck us with an astonishment which lessened but to make our grief more sensible. He it was who had procured our admittance into China; who besides, in delivering us from the viceroy of Hamcheu, had saved our lives, and, which we looked on as a greater kindness, was ready to assist us with his credit, in the designs we had to promote God's glory and the interest of our holy faith.

We were not the only losers by his death, for I dare say every body missed him: in his care, zeal and prudence, was owing the restauration of the Christian religion, which had been almost ruined by the late persecutions: he encouraged the old christ-
tians

tians constancy, and supported the weakness of the new, by taking them under his especial protection; his recommendation gained our missionaries respect; he had saved Macao, of which the Tartars had entertained some jealousies; and the state itself, to which he had rendered considerable services, was not a little beholding to him; so that the Europeans, the Chinese, and the emperor himself did equally look on him as their father. This great man, so much respected in the East, deserved, my lord, that you should take notice of him; and in pursuance to my design, which was in this letter to give you an account of our journey from Siam to the chief town of China, I could not end with a subject that might better challenge your attention. I am with all respect,

My Lord,

*Your Honour's most humble,
and obedient Servant,*

L. J.

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## L E T T E R II.

*To her Highness the Dutchess of Nemours.*

*The Manner of our Reception by the Emperor, and  
what we observed at Pekin.*

Madam,

**N**One but a lady of a comprehensive genius, and an unlimited zeal, could, as you do, concern herself in what passes at so great a distance. The curiosities of Europe were too few for your vast mind, which would be a stranger to nothing that might inform or edify &c. and I may without flattery say, that the East has no secrets you have not pried into, nor any rarities you are unacquainted with,

I have

• I have myself learned from your highness several things unknown to most travellers, and, having been as far as the world reaches, must confess that your knowledge has travelled farther yet than me

What then, madam, can I tell you of China more than you already have discovered, unless it be some particulars of my voyage, which, being the latest any European has made thither, will at least have the charms of novelty? It being my duty to give a great statesman an account of it, I make bold to send your highness the letter I wrote to him some days since, and what I now add shall at once be a continuation of it, and a token of the respect I bear you, and the readiness I shall ever be in, to obey your highness's commands

On our arrival at Pekin, we found the court in mourning for the empress dowager the courts of justice were shut up, and the emperor gave no audience But the 27 days being spent, during which the laws oblige him to close mourning, he sent one of his officers to our house, to see how we did, and to ask us questions The message was very obliging, and, besides a thousand other civilities, we were told the emperor would be as kind to us as he had been to the fathers at his court, since we were all of the same society

The gentleman told us, his imperial majesty would gladly know what the French court thought of his progress into Tartary, and the defeat of Ousunguay (who was a Chinese rebel that had given him no small trouble) He asked us in what perfection learning was in Europe, whether any new invention had lately been made, or any considerable discovery Then he spoke much of the honours the emperor designed to pay to the memory of father Verbiest, for whom his majesty had a particular affection That name, madam, cannot be unknown to

you, and you are too much concerned in what relates to the Eastern church, to be ignorant of her loss in that illustrious missionary's death

We all replied that we gratefully acknowledged the emperor's bounty, but that among the ceremonies, with which the Chinese used to express their respect for their deceased friends, there were some which seemed to disagree with the sanctity of our religion. *How!* answered he, *Do you oppose the emperor's will?* To this a father returned, *My lord, our lives are the emperor's, he may take them away when he pleases, but nothing in the world is able to make us alter the least tittle of our belief.* My orders, said he, are not to dispute it with you, but to ask you for the petition, which, according to custom, you are to present to him upon this occasion. The emperor, by an unprecedented goodness, would gladly peruse and correct it himself, if it should need any amendment but he commands you to keep this favour secret.

All, that is presented to the emperor, ought to be indited in terms so nicely conformable to the laws and customs of the country, in respect of his quality who speaks, and of the business he treats of, that the penning of it is no little trouble, especially for a stranger. An improper expression, a word, nay a letter misplaced, is sufficient to undo a Mandarin, and several have lost their places for being guilty of the like faults, either through inadvertency or ignorance. The emperor, well skill'd in all these formalities, questioned our capacity in that respect, and would trust no body but himself, so that by an incredible goodness he took the pains to compose it, that it might stand the most critical examination.

Some days after, the same gentleman came with several new queries. He enquired particularly into the motives of the late Dutch war, and into the famous passage of the Rhine. *For in truth,* said he, *what*

*what has been told the emperor is not to be believed. Perhaps the river is neither so broad, so deep, nor so rapid as is reported; and perhaps the Dutch had some private reasons not to oppose your king's conquests with more vigour.*

Then, madam, did we wish for a more perfect knowledge of his language, that we might represent to him the great soul, the good fortune, and the unshaken valour of Lewis the Great, to whose soldiers nothing is impossible while they fight in his view, and are animated by his example. The father, who was our interpreter, told him, however; as much as would persuade him, that none but such a hero could frame and carry on the like enterprizes: He was astonished at our recital of them, and rose immediately to go and report it to his prince.

As he was going out he turned to us, saying, *Gentlemen, all I have heard is indeed wonderful, but what my eyes behold seems no less surprising: Who could think that these fathers who have dwelt here so long, who are of a different nation, and never saw you before, should look on you as their brethren; that you should treat them like yours, and that you should be as kind to each other, as if you had been acquainted all your lives. I really am extremely taken with this charity, and can no longer doubt the truth of what you profess.* So open a confession might give us some hopes, that *He was not far from the kingdom of God.* It is true he believed, but alas, of what use is that belief, when we have not the courage to act accordingly, but to inhanse our guilt?

If we had come thither Incognito, the Mandatines would have had nothing to say to us, but it being in pursuance of an order from the Empou; which, as I have already hinted, is one of the most noted courts of justice in the empire, the viceroy of the province, we came from, remitted us into their hands,

and we were, according to custom, to be delivered up by them to their sovereign. Wherefore as soon as the mourning ended, and they had leave to sit, we were summoned before them, with orders to carry thither all our mathematical machines and instruments, of which they already had an inventory.

The emperor, who would not have us do any thing without his advice, was acquainted with it, and sent us word it was not fitting we should shew our instruments, and that we might, if we thought fit, decline making a personal appearance. We went thither however, being several times invited in a most obliging manner, and not judging it convenient by a blunt refusal to offend so considerable a body, which besides was our judge, and already but too great an enemy to our religion.

Some Mandarines, deputed by their president for that purpose, made us a very civil reception: They desired us to sit down, and presented us with some tea before they had drunk any themselves; a respect they do not pay even to ambassadors, as father Pereira, a Portuguese, assured us, who had been present at an audience they had lately given to those of Portugal.

This visit was indeed but for form's sake, to the end they might inform the emperor of our being safely arrived to town, according to his majesty's commands. So that, after some compliments on each side, we were desired to attend the next day at the palace, when they would discharge us.

We went thither accordingly at the appointed time, and having staid during some hours in a large court, where the Mandarines usually wait, who have any business there, their president or chief justice brought us the answer to an address he had according to custom presented on our account. This answer was written on a small varnished board, wrapped

wrapped up in a piece of yellow taffety: The contents were, *That we might use our instruments, and settle in what part of the empire we pleased, according to the first orders from court, when we were sent for thither. And that in the mean while, the Lipou would deliver us up to the other fathers, who were to introduce us into the emperor's presence, when his majesty should think fit.*

Yet that prince's intentions were not that we should leave Peking, but on the contrary, he would have kept us all there, and lodged us in his palace. He had expressed himself so clearly on that point, that we had need of all the interest and dexterity of father Pereira, to divert the storm. That father, who was then superior of all the missionaries, moved with compassion that so many vineyards were ruined for want of husbandmen, judged we might be more useful in the country. He knew besides what an aversion we had to a courtier's life, which he might easily learn from our continual complaints against it.

These and several other reasons induced him to intreat the emperor that he would not oppose it, and his zeal inspired him with such effectual methods, that the good prince at last consented. *But, said he, it shall be on condition we divide the spoil; I'll take two at your choice, and you shall dispose of the other three; what can you say against this, I quit you the better half?*

We had not yet had the honour to attend his imperial majesty, for the formalities I last mentioned were to precede our audience. But the Lipou had scarce delivered up their charge, when two eunuchs came to the college, to warn the superior, that he should attend with his brethren in a court of the palace which was appointed. We were instructed in the ceremonies usual on such occasions, which was done with little trouble, being already half licked into a Chinese form.

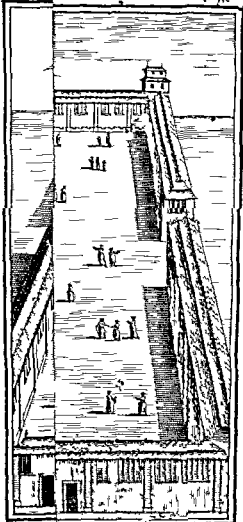
First then, we were carried in chairs to the first gate, whence we went on foot through eight courts of a prodigious length, built round with lodgings of different architecture, but all very ordinary, except those large square buildings over the arches through which we passed from one court to another. Those indeed were stately, being of an extraordinary thickness, and proportionable in breadth and height, and built with fair white marble, but which was worn rough thro' age. Thro' one of these courts ran a small rivulet, over which were laid several little bridges of the same marble, but of a whiter colour and better workmanship.

It were hard, madam, to descend into particulars, and give you a pleasing description of that palace, because its beauty does not consist so much in being composed of several curious pieces of architecture, as in a prodigious quantity of buildings; and an infinite number of adjoining courts and gardens which are all regularly disposed, and in the whole make a palace really great, and worthy of the monarch who inhabits it.

The only thing which surprised me, and seemed singular in its kind, is the emperor's throne. The best description of it, which my memory will afford me, is this: In the midst of one of those great courts stands a square basis or solid building, of an extraordinary bigness, whose top is adorned with a balustrade, much after our fashion; this supports another like unto it, but framed taper-wise, over which are placed three more, still losing in bulk as they gain in height. Upon the uppermost is built a large hall, whose roof, being covered with gilt tiles, is borne by the four walls, and as many rows of varnished pillars, between which is seated the throne.

These vast bases, with their balustrades made of white marble, and thus disposed amphitheater-wise,  
when





*The Great Court of his Palace  
and*

when the sun shines, dazzle the eyes of the beholder, with the lustre and splendor of the gold and varnish, and afford a most beautiful prospect, especially since they are placed in the midst of a spacious court, and surrounded by four stately rows of building so that were its beauty enhanced by the ornaments of our modern architecture, and by that noble simplicity which is so much valued in our buildings, it would doubtless be as magnificent a throne as ever was raised by art

After a quarter of an hour's walk, we at length came to the emperor's apartment. The entrance was not very splendid, but the anti chamber was adorned with sculptures, gildings, and marble, whose neatness and workmanship were more valuable than the richness of the stuff. As for the presence chamber, the second mourning not being over, it was still disrobed of all its ornaments, and could boast of none but the sovereign's person, who sat after the Tartar's custom, on a table or Sopha, rised three feet from the ground, and covered with a plain white carpet, which took up the whole breadth of the room. There lay by him some books, ink, and pencils, he was cloathed with a black sattin vest, furred with sable, and a row of young eunuchs plainly habited, and unarmed, stood on each hand close legged, and with their arms extended downwards along their sides, which is looked upon there as the most respectful posture.

In that state, the most modest that even a private man could have appeared in, did he chuse to be seen by us, desiring we should observe his dutifulness to the empress his departed mother, and the grief he conceived at her death, rather than the state and grandeur he is usually attended with.

Being come to the door, we hastened with no little speed (for such is the custom) till we came to the end

of the chamber opposite to the emperor. Then all abreast we stood some time, in the same posture the eunuchs were in.

Next we fell on our knees, and having joined our hands, and lifted them up to our heads, so that our arms and elbows were at the same height, we bowed thrice to the ground, and then stood again as before : The same prostration was repeated a second time, and again a third, when we were ordered to come forward, and kneel before his majesty.

The gracious prince, whose condescension I cannot enough admire, having enquired of us of the grandeur and present state of France, the length and dangers of our voyage, and the manner of our treatment by the Mandarines : *Well, said he, see if I can add any new favour to those I have already conferred upon you. Is there any thing you would desire of me ? you may freely ask it.* We returned him humble thanks, and begged he would permit us, as a token of our sincere gratitude, to lift up each day of our lives our hands to heaven, to procure to his royal person, and to his empire, the blessing of the true God, who alone can make princes really happy.

He seemed well satisfied with our answer, and permitted us to withdraw, which is performed, without any ceremony. The great respect and dread, which the presence of the most potent monarch in Asia inspired us with, did not yet awe us so far, but that we took a full view of his person. Indeed, lest our too great freedom herein should prove a crime (for in what concerns the emperor of China, the least mistake is such) we had first obtained his leave.

He was something above the middle stature, more corpulent than what in Europe we reckon handsome ; yet somewhat more slender than a Chinese would wish to be : full visaged, disfigured with the small pox, had a broad forehead, little eyes, and a small nose  
after

after the Chinese fashion ; his mouth was well made, and the lower part of his face very agreeable. In fine, tho' he bears no great majesty in his looks yet they shew abundance of good nature, yet his ways and actions have something of the prince in them, and shew him to be such.

From his apartment we went into another, where a Mandarin treated us with tea, and presented us, as from the emperor, with about a hundred pistoles. The gift seemed but mean, considering whom it came from, but was very considerable in respect to the custom of China, where it is the maxim of all great persons to take as much, and give as little as they can. On the other hand he loaded us with honours, and ordered one of his officers to wait on us to our house.

I confess, madam, that a man must be wholly insensible to all the concerns of this world, not to be moved with a secret complacency, at the having such respect paid him by one of the mightiest princes in the world. But one must not judge of us on that account, by what is usual with the men of this world, on the like occasions.

The truest cause of the pleasure, we receive from the favour of princes, is self-interest. It is well known, that their caresses are ever beneficial ; and a courtier would never be so overjoyful at a kind look or expression from his king, if he did not expect some more solid bounties would follow : But as for us, whom our vows and missions forbid to have such hopes, we look unconcernedly on all this world ; so that that part of it can never move or concern us :

It is true, God is sometimes well pleased to see religion respected in the persons of his ministers : He often uses those methods to strengthen the faith of new converts, who need such natural supports to fortify them against trials and temptations ; nay, it breeds even in the Gentiles a disposition to embrace christianity,

christianity. These thoughts made us take more delight in those tokens of the emperor's favour; or, to speak more properly, made us find them less disagreeable.

Your highness is, perhaps, astonished to see the sovereign of an idolatrous nation so openly countenance our religion, and would gladly know what motives had induced him to it. His kindness for such strangers as we proceeds, doubtless, from the great esteem he has long since had for the missionaries at Peking. Besides the commendation of their learning, he has always found them sincere, honest, very zealous and affectionate to him, ever ready to obey his will, where their faith did not forbid them, harmless to a degree, he never could give over admiring, and ever desirous to proclaim the true God.

He is above all so well persuaded, that this is the sole end of all their enterprizes, that he takes a secret delight in contributing to the propagation of the faith, thinking he can no other way better recompense these fathers earnestness in his service.

And so father Verbiest, on his death-bed, wrote a letter to him, in part of which he thus expressed himself: *Dread Sir, I die contented, in that I have spent almost all my life in your majesty's service; but I beg your majesty will be pleased to remember when I am dead, that my only aim, in what I did, was, to gain, in the greatest monarch of the East, a protector to the most holy religion of the world.*

Perhaps, madam, you may have seen certain libels (for I know not what to call them else) which represent our society as a sort of men possessed with avarice and ambition, who undertake these long and painful travels, only to enrich themselves by a sacrilegious and scandalous traffick. Your highness may expect that calumny (the inseparable companion of a spirit of sedition and heresy) not satisfied with persecuting

\*persecuting our religion in Europe, should come even to the utmost parts of the world, to slander those who endeavour to settle it there, as pure as we received it from our forefathers, and you will not be sorry to hear, how that very idolatry, which we destroy, cannot forbear witnessing our good intentions, and that, if China saw what pictures are drawn here of her missionaries, she would hardly know them. But it is not before your highness they need an advocate.

\* Among the several things which happened then at Pekin, nothing was more sorrowful and at once more honourable to us, than the funeral of father Verbieft, which his imperial majesty had ordered to be put off till the last devours had been paid the empress dowager. Father Thomas, a jesuit, has described this ceremony at large. I dare hope an extract of what he has wrote will not be unwelcome to you, both because it will give you some insight into their customs on the like occasions, and that you will thereby grow better acquainted with a man whom his merit has made known to all the world. Be pleased then to accept of it as follows.

It seemed good to divine wisdom, to take to himself from this mortal life father Ferdinando Verbieft, a Fleming, and to bestow on him the recompence of funts. Our missionaries affliction cannot easily be expressed, but much harder would it be to reckon by how many exemplary virtues, and considerable services, he has merited their esteem and gratitude.

Besides several other good qualities, the greatness of his soul is particularly to be admired, which has never failed him in the most cruel persecutions, so that he was ever triumphant over the enemies of the faith. The survey of the mathematicks was at first

first proffered him, which dignity he accepted of, in hopes it would enable him to set on foot our missions, which were then wholly laid aside

He obtained a toleration for evangelical pastors, who, after a long banishment, had their churches restored them. He stifled some persecutions in their birth, and others he prevented, which threatened the tender flocks. The Mandarines no sooner knew him, but they had a respect for him, and the emperor entertained so good an opinion of his capacity, that he kept him above a quarter of a year near his person, and during that time spent three or four hours every day with him in private, discoursing of several sciences, especially mathematicks.

In these conversations our zealous missionary endeavoured to bring him into a liking of our religion. he would explain to him its most stupendous mysteries, and made him observe its holiness, its truth and necessity, insomuch, that the emperor, struck with his powerful arguments, often owned, *that he believed a God*. his majesty assured him of it, by a writing under his own hand, wherein he said, among other things, *That all the religions of his empire seemed to him vain and superstitious, that the idols were nothing, and that he foresaw christianity would ere day be built on their ruins*. A Chinese doctor having in one of his books taken the liberty to place the christian religion among the several heresies China was infected with; the emperor, upon the father's complaint, struck out these lines himself, telling him the whole empire should know what he had done.

Father Verbiest's interest was such, that at his instigation the old instruments which stood on the platform of the observatory were pulled down, to make room for new ones of his contriving. He gave directions for the casting of brass guns, which saved the stars from ruin. He applied himself to several

Several other works, to serve the publick, or satisfy the emperor's curiosity; and one may say, that on this last account he has searched into the most rare and ingenious inventions, that arts and sciences have ever offered us.

The whole court looked upon him as the wisest man of his age, but above all was charmed with his modesty. It is true, no man ever was more mild, and tractable than he; humbling himself before every one, while every one strove to exalt him: insensible to all the things in this world, except where religion was concerned; for then he was no more the same man, and, as tho' he had been animated by a new spirit, his looks, his words, his actions, all were great, and becoming a christian hero. The very emperor dreaded him at such times, and was not easily persuaded to admit him into his presence: *He will fly out, would he say, into some indecency, which I must be forced, tho' unwillingly, to resent.*

This holy boldness proceeded from a lively faith, and a great confidence in God. He despaired of nothing, tho' humanly impossible; and would often say, *We must never forget two of the chief maxims of christian morality: First, that, let our projects be never so well laid, they will certainly fall, if God leaves us to our own wisdom. Secondly, That it were in vain the whole universe should arm itself to destroy the work of God; nothing is powerful against the Almighty, and every thing prospers that Heaven approves of.* So he never entered on any enterprize without imploring its help, tho' however he left no means untried that reason and christian prudence offered him.

Thus did his zeal each day increase in strength and purity: the establishment of our faith wholly employed his thoughts, and whatever occupation else, he was put upon, proved a torment to him.

He avoided all idle visits and conversations, and could



could not endure to see people study only for curiosities sake: he never so much as read the news that came from Europe, which at such a distance we are usually so greedy of; only he would hear the chief heads, provided you would speak them in a few words. He would spend whole days and nights in writing letters of consolation, instruction or recommendation for the missionaries; in composing divers works for the emperor or chief lords at his court; and in compiling the kalendar, calculating, with an indefatigable industry, the motion of the stars for every year.

This, and *the care of all the churches*, so impaired his strength, that, in spite of the strength of his constitution, he fell at last into a kind of consumption, which yet did not hinder his framing great designs for the advancement of his religion. He had taken such exact measures for the settling of it in the most remote parts of China, in the eastern Tartary, and even in the kingdom of Kovia; that nothing but his death could have prevented the execution of so well contriv'd a project.

Nor is his character, as a private person, less illustrious. For at his first admittance into our order he was a true monk, strict in the performance of its rules, very observant to his superiors, and loving study and retirement above all things; which he persisted in, even among the multitude of business, in the midst of which he would be as sedate as a hermit in his cell.

His conscience was nice to extremity, so that no man could take more care than he did to be always ready to make his appearance before him who can espy faults even in saints and angels. To preserve his innocence, he never went out without a severe cilice or an iron chain, and used to say, it was a shame for a jesuit to be clothed in silk and in the livery

livery of the world, and not to wear the livery of Christ.

His soul was naturally great, and, when others necessities wanted a supply, his charity was boundless. But he was hard-hearted to himself, courting poverty even in plenty, to that degree, that the emperor, who took great notice of him, often sent him stuff with express orders to wear it, and be more sumptuous in his apparel. His bed, table, and furniture were indeed too mean for a Mandarin; but he ever preferred his station in the church before that in the state. He has often protested, he would never have accepted of that office, had he not hoped, by seeming to the Gentiles the head of the christians, to have thereby borne all their envy, and been the most exposed to their malice, and the first sacrificed in case of persecution.

This hope made him be satisfied with his condition, and his writings expressed such an ardent desire of dying for Jesus Christ, that nothing but martyrdom was wanting to his being a martyr; yet he might in some measure be reckon'd such, since he begged it of God with that groaning of spirit, which is a continual suffering to those that cannot obtain it: *Reckon me, O Lord, did he often cry out, among those who have desired, but never could shed their blood for thee. I have, indeed, neither their innocency, their virtue, nor their courage, but thou may'st apply their merits to me, and (which will make me much more agreeable in thy sight) thou canst cloath me with thine own. Under that veil of thine infinite mercy, I dare offer my life as a sacrifice to thee. I have been so happy as to confess thy holy name among the people, at court, before the tribunals under the weight of irons, and in the darkness of prisons, but what will this confession avail me, unless signed with my blood*

Full of these exalted thoughts, and already ripe<sup>d</sup> for heaven, by the practice of every christian virtue, he was seiz'd with a sickness of which he died. It began with a faintness and an universal decay of nature, which grew into a consumption. The emperor's physicians kept him up some time with the help of physick, especially cordials, in which the Chinese have a wonderful success; but, his fever increasing, art at length was forced to yield to nature. He received the sacraments with a zeal that inflamed all that were present; and, when he yielded up the ghost, they were equally struck with devotion and sorrow.

The emperor, who, the day before had lost the empress his mother, felt a double grief when he heard the news. He ordered the burial to be put off till the court went out of deep mourning; and then he sent two lords of the highest quality to pay him on his behalf the same devoirs which private men usually pay to their dead. They kneeled before the coffin, which was exposed in a hall, bowed several times, remaining a long while with their faces to the ground, and wept and groaned heavily, for that is the custom. Then after those, and several other expressions of their sorrow, they read aloud his encomium, which the emperor himself had composed, and which was to be set up near the corpse. It runs thus:

*We seriously consider within ourselves, that father Ferdinando Verbiest has, of his own good will, left Europe to come into our dominions, and has spent the greatest part of his life in our service; we must say this for him, That during all the time that he took care of the mathematicks, his predictions never failed, but always agreed with the motions of the heavens. Besides, far from neglecting our orders, he has ever approved himself exact, diligent, faithful, &c. &c. &c.*  
and

and constant in his labour, till he had finished his work. As soon as we heard of his sickness, we sent him our physician, and when we knew that a dead sleep had taken him away from us, our heart was wounded with a lively grief. We gave two hundred golden crowns, and some pieces of silk, as a contribution to the charges of his funeral: and it is our pleasure, that this declaration bear witness of the sincere affection we bore him.

The prime Mandarinés and several lords at court followed their sovereign's example. Some wrote speeches in his praise on large pieces of sattin, which were hung up in the hall where the body lay in state; others sent in presents, and all mourned for his loss. At length the day for his funeral being agreed upon, which was the 11th of March 1688, every body was willing to contribute something towards the ceremony.

The emperor in the morning sent his father-in-law, who is also his uncle, with one of the chief lords of his court, attended by a gentleman of the bed-chamber, and five officers of his household, to represent his person; who all began by falling down before the corpse, and wept a pretty while, during which, all things were disposed for the procession.

The college is situated near the south gate, whence you go to the north gate, by a street built in a strait line, about a hundred foot broad, and a league long, which toward the middle is crossed by another exactly like it, one end of which leads to the western gate, being within six hundred paces of our burying-place, which the emperor Vanli formerly bestowed on father Ricci, but was taken away during the late persecution, and not restored till now by a special favour from the present emperor. Thro' these two streets the funeral passed, in the following order.

First, came a trophy thirty foot high, varnished over with red, on which were written, in large golden characters, the name and titles of father Verbieft. This was, as it were, the fore-runner of the ensuing pomp, which began with a great cross hung with flags, and carried between two rows of christians, all cloathed in white, holding in one hand a lighted taper, and in the other a handkerchief to wipe off their tears. The Gentiles are used on such solemnities to shed feigned tears; but the christians loss made them shed real ones. Next, some distance off, followed in the same order the picture of the Virgin Mary in a frame, round which were pieces of silk neatly plated in several manners, instead of carving; and then St. Michael's representation was borne with the like ceremonies. And I may say, that the christians who walked on either side, devoutly praying, inspired even the heathen with a veneration for those precious tokens of our faith.

Immediately after came the father's encomium, of the emperor's own composing, written on a large piece of yellow sattin; a crowd of christians surrounded it, and two rows of those, who had been invited, followed it in a respectful manner. At length appeared the corpse, in a coffin made of ordinary wood, but varnished and gilt after the manner of the country, carried by sixty bearers, and attended by the missionaries, the deputies from court, and a throng of lords and Mandarines, who closed up the procession. It took up above a thousand paces, the streets all the way were lined by an infinite number of spectators, who with amazement beheld our christian rites triumphing, even in their capital city, over pagan superstition.

tears may shew the greatness of our sorrow, 'but that we remain silent, because we can find no words sufficient to express our gratitude.

The emperor was informed of what had passed, and some days after the \* chief court of rites presented a petition, that his majesty would suffer them to decree some new honours to that illustrious father's memory. The emperor not only granted it, but willed them to consider, that a stranger of so extraordinary a merit was not to be look'd upon as an ordinary man. In the very first meeting they ordered seven hundred golden crowns should be laid out on a tomb for him, and the encomium, which the emperor had wrote, should be engraved on a marble stone, and that some Mandarin should be once more deputed to pay him their last devoirs in behalf of the empire. Then they dignified him, that is, gave him a higher title than any he had enjoyed during his life.

While the emperor was paying him honour on earth, the holy father, no doubt, prayed for him in heaven: for it is very observable, that that prince never was more inquisitive about religion, than at that time. He sent one of his gentlemen every minute to the fathers, to enquire about the condition of souls in the other world, about heaven, hell, purgatory, the existence of a God, his providence, and the means necessary to salvation: so that God seemed to move his heart after an extraordinary manner, and to affect it with that anxiety which usually precedes our conversion. But that happy moment was not yet come. However, who knows but father Verbiest's prayers, and the care of several zealous missionaries, who have succeeded him, may hasten the execution of those designs which providence

\* Which answers to our college of F--.

dence seems to have on that great prince? I am most respectfully, Madam,

*Your Highness's most humble,  
most obedient servant,*

L. J

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L E T T E R III.

*To his Highness the Cardinal of FURSTENBERG,  
Of the Cities, Houses, and Chief Buildings of China.*

*My Lord,*

**A**MONG the several empires into which the world has hitherto been divided, that of China has ever obtained so considerable a place, that a prince cannot be wholly ignorant of what concerns it, without neglecting a point of knowledge necessary for those in his place and condition.

This, my lord, was, no doubt, the motive that induced your highness to inquire so particularly into the state of that country, and to desire an exact account of the number and bigness of its cities, the multitude of its inhabitants, the beauty of its publick buildings, and figure of its palaces

By this it plainly appears, that the vast genius, you have for business, does in no wise lessen the acuteness of your judgment in the sublimest arts, and especially in architecture, of which, the most excellent works raised by your directions at Modave, Yverne, Berni, St. Germans, and above all in the famous cathedral of Strasbourg, are so many instances.

It having been my business to run over all China, where in five or six years time I have travelled above two thousand

thousand leagues, I can perhaps satisfy your highness with more ease than any one besides. I shall therefore present you with a description of what seemed to me most remarkable.

Pekin, that is the north-court, is the chief city of China, and the usual seat of its emperors. It is so named to distinguish it from Nankim, the south-court, another very considerable city, so called from the emperor's residing there in former ages, it being the finest, the most commodious and best situated of the whole empire; but the continual incursions of the Tartars, a warlike and very troublesome neighbour, obliged him to settle in the most northerly provinces, that he might be always ready to oppose them, with the numerous army he usually keeps near his court.

Pekin was the place fixed upon, being situate in the 40th degree of northern latitude, in a very fertile plain, and not far from the long wall. Its neighbourhood to the sea on the east, and the great canal on the south, afford it a communication with several fine provinces, from which it draws most of its subsistence.

This city, which is of an exact square form, was formerly four long leagues round; but the Tartars, settling there, forced the Chinese to live without the walls, where they in a very short while built a new town, which, taking a greater compass in length than breadth, doth with the old one compose an irregular figure. Thus Peking is made up of two cities; one is called the Tartars, because they permit none else to inhabit it; and the other the Chinese, as large, but much more inhabited than the other. Both together are six great leagues in circuit, allowing 3600 paces to each league. ~~This~~ I can aver to be true, it having been measured by the emperor's special command.

This,



This, my lord, will seem strange to those who are acquainted with Europe only, and think Paris the largest, as it is doubtless the finest city in the world; yet the difference between them is great. Paris, according to the draught Mr. Blondell has made, by order from our magistrates, on the account of a design they have to surround it with new walls, contains in its greatest length but 2500 paces, and † consequently, tho' we should suppose it square, would be but 10000 paces round; so we should find it half as big as the Tartars town alone, and but a quarter as large as all Peking.

But then if one reflects that their houses are generally but one story high, and ours, one with another, are four, it will appear, that Peking has not more lodgings than Paris, but rather less, because its streets are much wider; besides the emperor's palace, which is of a vast extent, is not half inhabited, and there are magazines of rice for the sustenance of above 200000 men; again, there are large courts filled with little houses, in which those who stand for their doctor's degree are examined; which alone would make a very big city.

Yet we must not conclude from hence, that there are at Paris and Peking the like number of inhabitants; for the Chinese are very close together in their dwellings, so that twenty or more of them will lie in as little room as ten with us, and it must needs be so, since the multitude of people in the streets is so great, that one is frightened at it; it being such that persons of quality have always a horseman going before them, to make way. Even the widest streets are not free from confusion; and at the sight of so many horses, mules, camels, waggons, chairs and rings of 100 or 200 persons, who gather here  
 and

1. 4

† In the draught the length does not bear a reciprocal propor-

and there round the fortune-tellers, one would judge that some unusual show had drawn the whole country to Peking.

Indeed, to outward appearance our most populous cities are wildernesses in respect of this, especially if we consider that there are more women than men, and yet in these great crouds, you shall rarely see a woman. This, I suppose, has made some people think both cities might contain six or seven millions of souls, which was a great mistake. By the following reflections it will, perhaps, appear that one must not always guess at the number of inhabitants in a place by the crouds that are seen in it.

First, from all the neighbouring towns a multitude of peasants daily flock to Peking, with several useful and necessary commodities; now no river coming up to the city, these must be brought by land which increases the number of carters, waggons, camels, and other beasts of burthen. So that morning and night, at the opening or shutting of the gates, there are such throngs of people going in or out, that you must wait a long while before you can get by; wherefore you must not esteem all you meet citizens.

Secondly, most artificers in China work in their customers houses; as for example, if I want a suit, my taylor comes in the morning to my lodging, where he works all day, and at night returns home, and so the rest. These are continually about, looking out for business; even the smiths carry with them their anvil, their furnace, and other implements for their ordinary use. This helps to increase the multitude.

Thirdly, all persons, especially those of any note, never go abroad but on horseback or in chairs, with a numerous train. If an officer, gentleman, lawyer, physician, and wealthy citizen were always thus attended, the streets would be so open.

• In the fourth place, when a Mandarin goes any where, all his inferior officers follow him in all their formalities, so that they form a kind of procession. The lords at court, and princes of the blood, never are without a great guard of horse, and being necessitated to go almost every day to court, their very equipage is sufficiently cumbersome to the city.

It is evident that these customs, which are peculiar to China, do very much increase the throng, and it must not be wondered at, that the city should seem much more populous, than it really is: and what must convince us is, that, as I have shewn, there is more room for inhabitants in Paris than in Pekin. Wherefore though it be granted that twenty or five and twenty persons lodge there in as little compass as ten do at Pekin; yet Pekin will be found to contain near twice as many as Paris does, and I think I shall not be very wide of the truth, if I allow it two millions of inhabitants.

I have been something prolix upon this point, because I find it but slightly inquired into by most historians. Nothing is more deceitful than number at first sight. We think upon a view of the sky, that the stars are numberless, and, when told, are surprised to find they are so few. To see an army of a hundred thousand men in the field, you would imagine all the world were there; and even those, who are used to such a sight, are apt to mistake if they are not aware.

• It is good to examine every thing ourselves, especially in China, where they never reckon but by millions; and though in these cases one cannot be so very exact, it is not impossible to come so near the truth as to satisfy any curious inquirer.

• Almost all the streets are built in a direct line, the greatest being about a hundred and twenty foot broad, and a good league long, and the shops where they

they sell silks and china-ware, which generally take up the whole street, make a very agreeable perspective. The Chinese have a custom which adds to the beauty of their streets. Each shop-keeper puts out before his house, on a little kind of pedestal, a board twenty or two and twenty foot high, painted, varnished, and often gilt, on which are written, in large characters, the names of the several commodities he sells. These kind of pilasters, thus placed on each side of the street, and almost at an equal distance from each other, make a pretty odd show. This is usual in almost all the cities of China, and I have in some places seen so very neat ones, that one would think they had designed to make a stage of the street.

Two things however detract much from their beauty. The first, that the houses are not proportionable, being neither well built nor high enough. The second, that they are always pestered with mud or dust. That country, so well regulated in every thing else, is very deficient in this: both winter and summer are equally troublesome to those that walk abroad, and therefore are horses and chairs so much in request: for the dirt spoils the silken boots which they wear there, and the dust sticks to their cloaths, especially if they are made of sattin, which they have a way of oiling, to give it the more lustre. There is so much dust raised by the multitude of horses, that the city is alwas covered with a cloud of it, which gets into the houses, and makes its way into the closest closets, so that, take what care you will, your goods will ever be full of it. They strive to allay it by a continual besprinkling the streets with water, but there is still so much left, as is very offensive, both as to cleanliness and health.

Of all the building this mighty city consists in, the only remarkable one is the imperial palace, which I have

I have already described to your highness: I shall only add, to give you a more exact notion of it, that it not only includes the emperor's house and gardens; but also a little town inhabited by the officers at court, and a great number of artificers who are employed and kept by the emperor; for none but the eunuchs lie in the inner palace. The outward town is defended by a very good wall without, and divided from the emperor's house by one of less strength. All the houses are very low and ill contrived, far worse than those in the Tartars city; so that the quality of its inhabitants, and the conveniency of being near the court, are the only things that it is commendable for.

The inner palace is made up of nine vast courts, built in one line, in length, for I comprehend not those on the wings, where are the kitchen, stables, and other offices. The arches thro' which you go from one to another are of marble, and over each there stands a large square Gothick building; the roof looks odd, but yet handsome; for the ends of the joices are continued beyond the wall in manner of a cornice, which at a distance looks very neat. The sides of each court are closed by lesser apartments or galleries; but when you come to the emperor's lodgings, there, indeed, the portico's supported by stately pillars, the white marble-steps by which you ascend to the inward halls, the gilt roofs, the carved-work, varnish, gilding, and painting, they are adorned with, the floors made of marble or porcelain, but chiefly the great number of different pieces of architecture of which they consist, dazzle the beholders eye, and truly look great, becoming the majesty of so great a monarch. But still, the imperfect notion, the *Ch. 1* *the* *slave* of all kinds of arts, is betrayed by the *im* *m* *able* faults they are guilty of. The *apart* *ments* *are* *ill* contrived, the ornaments irregular, there

there wants that uniformity in which consists the beauty and convenience of our palaces. In a word, there is as it were, deformity in the whole, which renders it very displeasing to foreigners, and must needs offend any one that has the least notion of true architecture.

Some relations, however, cry it up as arts masterpiece: the reason is, because the missionaries, who wrote them, had never seen any thing beyond it, or else long use has accustomed them to it; for it is observable, that, let us dislike a thing never so, time will at length make it supportable. Our fancy habituates itself to any sight, and therefore an European, that has spent twenty or thirty years in China, can seldom give so good a judgment of it, as he that just comes in and views it. As the true accent of a language is often lost among those who pronounce it ill, so the sharpness of a man's judgment is blunted by conversing with those who have none.

The guards placed in the gates and avenues of the palace have no other arms but their scymiters, and are not so numerous as I at first imagined; but there is a multitude of lords and Mandarines, constantly attending at the usual time of audience. Formerly the whole palace was inhabited by eunuchs, whose power and insolence was grown to such a pitch, that they became an insupportable grievance to the princes of the empire; but the latter emperors of China, especially those descended from Tartary, have so humbled them, that they are at present very inconsiderable. The youngest serve as pages, the other are put to the vilest employments, their task being to sweep the rooms and keep them clean; they are severely punished by their overseers, who never pass by the least fault.

The number of the emperor's wives, concubines is not easily known, it being very great and never

never fixed They never were seen by any one but himself, and scarce durst a man inquire about them They are all maidens of quality, which the Mandarines or governors of the provinces choose, and as soon as they are entered the palace, they have no farther correspondence with their friends, no not with their very fathers This forced and perpetual solitude (for most of them are never taken notice of by the emperor) together with the intrigues they set on work to get into his favour, and the jealousy they have of one another, which wracks them with suspicions, envy, and hate, makes the most part of them very miserable Among those who are so happy as to gain their prince's approbation, three are chosen which bear the title of queens These are in a far higher degree of honour than the rest, having each their lodgings, their court, their ladies of honour, and other female attendants

Nothing is wanting that can contribute to their diversion Their furniture, cloaths, attendance is all rich and magnificent it is true, all their happiness consists in pleasing their lord, for no business of any consequence comes to their knowledge, and as they do not assist the state with their counsels, so they do not disturb it with their ambition

The Chinese differ very much from us in that point, they say Heaven has endowed women with good nature, modesty, and innocence, that they might look after their families, and take care of their children's education, but that, men are born with strength of body and mind, with wit and generosity to govern and rule the world They are astonished when we tell them, that with us the scepter often falls into a princess's hands, and often say by way of jest *天授女權* *Heaven has given the lady's kingdom*

Thus, my lord, I have given you a true but general account of the emperor of China's palace, so  
much

much boasted of by historians, because perhaps in all Pekin they meet not with any worth their notice: for indeed all besides are so mean, that it would be an abuse to our language to give the title of palace to their noblemens houses. They are but one story high, as are all the rest; tho'; I confess, the great number of lodgings, for themselves and their servants, does make some amends for their want of beauty and magnificence. Not but that the Chinese are, as much as any nation, in love with looking great and spending high, but the custom of the country, and the danger of being taken notice of, is a curb to their inclinations.

While I was at Pekin, one of the chief Mandarines (I think he was a prince) had built him a house something more lofty and stately than the rest; this was imputed to him as a crime, and those, whose province it was, accused him before the emperor, insomuch that the Mandarin, fearful of the event, pulled down his house while the business was under examination, before sentence was given. This was esteemed good policy in the establishment of the first monarchies; and could the Romans but have ever observed it, they would have been perhaps still as powerful in Europe, as the Chinese are in Asia. Their courts of justice are built no better than common houses. The courts indeed are large, the gates lofty, and sometimes imbellished with ornaments of architecture something tolerable; but the inward rooms and offices can boast neither state nor cleanliness.

Religion indeed has found better entertainment; you frequently meet with their idols temples, which the princes and people, equally superstitious, have raised at a vast expence, and beautified with great numbers of statues. The roofs especially are observable, for the splendor of their ties, varnished with yellow



yellow and green, for the many curious figures which are placed on every side, and the dragons shooting out at the corners, painted in the same colours. The emperors have founded several within the outward bounds of the palace; among which, two more eminent than the rest were built by the late monarch, at the request of the queen his mother who was very much infatuated with the religion of the Lama's, a sort of Tartarian priests, the most superstitious of all the Bonzes.

We were forbidden the entrance of these temples, being told it would prove of ill consequence, and give great offence to our fellow christians, so that curiosity gave place to our desire of edifying them. But we had the liberty of seeing the famous celebrated imperial observatory. Be pleased, my lord, to read what one of our ablest mathematicians has upon the report of travellers spoken of it. *Nothing in Europe is to be compared to it, whether for the magnificence of the place, or the bigness of those cast brazen instruments, which, having been during these seven hundred years exposed on the platforms of those large towers, are still as fair and intire as if they were but new molten. The divisions of those instruments are most exact, the disposition most proper for their design, and the whole work performed with an imitable neatness. In a word, it seemed that China insulted her sister nations, as if with all their learning and riches they could not come up to her in that point.*

Indeed, if China insults us by the sumptuousness of her observatory, she does well to do so 6000 leagues off, for were she nearer, she durst not, for shame, make any comparison.

These relations had mightily prejudiced us in favour of the observatory; but when we viewed it, we found it *very* *poor*. We came first into a pretty large court, where the lodgings of those who looked after the observatory were toward the right hand;

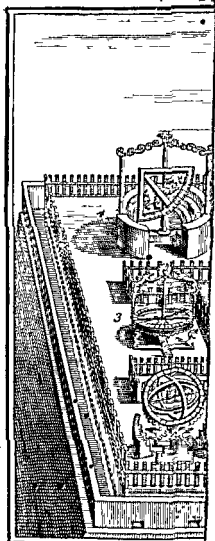
as you come in, you meet with a very narrow staircase, by which you mount to the top of such a square tower, as we formerly used to fortify our city walls withal; it is indeed contiguous on the inside to the wall of Pekin, and raised but ten or twelve feet above the bulwark. Upon this platform the Chinese astronomers had placed their instruments, which though but few, yet took up the whole room: but father Verbiest, when he undertook the survey and management of the mathematicks, judged them very useless, and persuaded the emperor to pull them down, and put up new ones of his own contriving. These old instruments were still in the hall near the tower, buried in dust and oblivion. We saw them thro' a window close set with iron bars. They appeared to us large, well cast, and shaped something like our astronomical rings. But they had laid in a by-court a celestrial globe of about three foot diameter, that we had a full view of; its figure was almost oval; it was divided with little exactness, and the whole work very coarse.

They have in a lower room near that place contrived a Gnomon. The passage, through which the ray enters, is about eight feet from the ground, horizontally placed, and made by two copper-plates which may be moved to and fro, to make the orifice larger or smaller. Under it lies a table covered with brass, in the midst of which, length-ways, they have struck a meridian line 15 feet long, divided by other cross lines, which are neither exact nor fine. They have cut little holes out into the sides wherein they put water to keep it exactly horizontal; and this indeed, for a Chinese contrivance, is the most tolerable of any I have seen, and might be serviceable to a careful astronomer; but I question whether their skill who invented it is so great, as to use it rightly.

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This observatory, of little worth, as to its ancient machines, and less as to its situation and building, is now enriched with several brazen instruments which father Verbiest has set up. They are large, well cast, imbellished with figures of dragons, and very well disposed to the use they are designed for; and was but the niceness of their divisions answerable to that of the work, and telescopes fastened to them instead of pins, according to the new method used by the royal academy, nothing, that we have of that kind, might be brought in competition with them. But tho' the father was, no doubt, very careful of the division of his circles, the Chinese artificer was either very negligent, or very incapable of following his directions: so that I would rather trust to a quadrant made by one of our good workmen at Paris, whose radius should be but one foot and a half, than to that of six feet, which is at this tower.

Perhaps, your highness may be willing at one view to see how they are disposed. This draught is very conformable to the original, and far from flattering it, as pictures and cuts generally do; I may say that it does not express half its beauty. But each several piece shewing but confusedly in this little space, I have added, in as few words, as I could, an explanation of the frame and embellishments of those noble instruments.

I. SPHÆRA ARMILLARIS, ZODIACALIS, of six feet in diameter. ,

This is supported by four dragons heads, whose bodies after several windings are fastened to the ends of two brazen beams hid a-cross, that bear the whole weight of the sphere. These dragons which were used rather than any other creature, because the emperor bears them in his coat of arms, are, as the Chinese represent them, wrap'd up in clouds, with long  
F hair

hair on their heads between their horns, a fuzzy beard under their lower jaw, flaming eyes, long sharp teeth, their mouth open, and breathing a whole stream of flame. Four lions of the same metal stand under the end of the aforesaid beams, whose heads are raised higher or lower by skrews fastened with them. The circles are divided both in their exterior and interior surface by cross lines into 360 degrees each, and each degree into 60 minutes, and the latter into portions of 10 seconds each by small pins.

## II. SPHÆRA EQUINOXIALIS, *of six feet diameter.*

This sphere is supported by a dragon, who bears it on his back bowed, and whose four claws seize the four ends of its pedestal, which as the former is formed of two brazen beams cross-wise, whose ends are also borne by four small lions, which serve to fix it right. The design is noble and well performed.

## III. HORIZON AZIMUTHALE, *six feet in diameter.*

This instrument, useful for the taking of azimuths, is composed of a large circle horizontally placed. The double index, which serves it for a diameter, runs over all the limb, and carries round along with it a rectangle triangle, the upper angle of which is fastened to a beam raised perpendicular from the center of the said horizon. Four folded dragons bow their heads under the inferior limb of the circle, to make it fast; and two other, wound round two small columns, mount on either side semicircular-wise, as high as the said beam, to which they are fastened, to keep the triangle steady.

IV. *A large QUADRANT, whose radius is six feet.*

The limb is divided into portions of ten seconds each; the lead, which shews its vertical situation, weighs a pound, and hangs from the center by a very fine brass wire. The index moves easily round the limb. A dragon folded in several rings, and wrap'd up in clouds, seizes on all parts the several plates of the instrument to fasten them, lest they should start out of their due position. The whole body of the quadrant hangs in the air, and a fixed axis runs thro' its center, round which the quadrant turns towards the parts of the heavens which the mathematician chooses to observe; and lest its weight should cause it to shiver, and lose its vertical position, a beam is raised on each side, secured at the bottom by a dragon, and fastened to the middle beam or axis by clouds which seem to come out of the air. The whole work is substantial and well contrived.

V. *A SEXTANT, whose radius is about eight feet.*

This represents the sixth part of a great circle borne by a beam, the basis of which is concave, made fast with dragons, and crossed in the middle by a brazen pillar, on one end of which is an engine, the help of whose wheels serves to facilitate the motion of that instrument. On this engine rests the middle of a small brazen beam which represents a radius of the sextant, and is fastened to it. Its upper part is terminated by a big cylinder, which is the center, round which the index turns; and the lower is extended above two feet beyond the limb, that it may be grasped by the pulley which serves to raise it. These large and heavy machines are of greater ornament than use.

VI. *A CELESTIAL GLOBE, of six feet diameter.*

This in my opinion is the fairest and best fashioned of all the instruments. The globe itself is bra-

zen, exactly round and smooth: the stars well made, and in their true places, and all the circles of a proportionable breadth and thickness. It is besides so well hung that the least touch moves it, and tho' it is above two thousand weight, the least child may elevate it to any degree. On its large concave basis are placed opposite four dragons, whose hair, standing up an end, support a noble horizon commendable for its breadth, its several ornaments, and the delicacy and niceness of the work. The meridian, in which the pole is fixed, rests upon clouds that issue out of the basis, and slides easily between them, its motion being facilitated by some hidden wheels, and moves with it the whole globe to give it the required elevation. Besides which the horizon, dragons, and the two brazen beams, which lie cross in the center of the basis's concavity, are all moved at pleasure, without stirring the basis which still remains fixed; this facilitates the due placing of the horizon, whether in respect of the natural horizon, or in respect of the globe. I wondered how men, who live six thousand leagues from us, could go through such a piece of work; and I must own, that if all the circles, which are divided, had been corrected by some of our workmen, nothing could be more perfect in their kind. These machines, being most of them above ten feet from the ground, have, for the astronomers greater conveniency, marble steps round them, cut amphitheater-wise.

Altho' these instrument seem so extraordinary fine, the Chinese could never have been persuaded to make use of them, and leave their old ones, without an especial order from the emperor to that effect. They are more fond of the most defective piece of antiquity, than of the most perfect of the moderns, differing much in that from us who are in love with nothing but what is new. Indeed we are all to blame, for time can add to, or detract nothing from the real worth

the west, the fourth turns his eyes southwards, and a fifth northwards, that nothing of what happens in the four corners of the world may escape their diligent observation. They take notice of the winds, the rain, the air, of unusual phenomena, such as eclipses, the conjunction or opposition of planets, fires, meteors, and whatever may be any way useful. This they keep a strict account of, which they bring in every morning to the surveyor of the mathematics, to be registered in his office. If this had always been practised by able and careful mathematicians, we should have a great number of curious remarks; but besides that, these astronomers are very unskilful, they take little care to improve that science and provided their salary be paid as usual, and their income constant, they are in no great trouble about the alterations and changes which happen in the sky. But if these phenomena are very apparent, as when there happens an eclipse, or a comet, they dare not then be altogether so negligent.

All nations have ever been astonished at eclipses, because they could not discover the cause of them; there is nothing so extravagant as the several reasons some have given for it, but one would wonder that the Chinese, who is to astronomy may justly claim superiority over all the world besides, have reasoned as absurdly on that point as the rest. They have fancied that in heaven there is a prodigious great dragon, who is a professed enemy to the sun and moon, and ready at all times to eat them up. For



very superstitious and very ridiculous. While the astronomers are on the tower to make their observations, the chief Mandarines belonging to the Lipou fall on their knees in a hall or court of the palace, looking attentively that way, and frequently bowing towards the sun to express the pity they take of him, or rather to the dragon, to beg him not to molest the world, by depriving it of so necessary a planet.

The mathematicians must be sure to relate nothing concerning the eclipses but what will certainly happen, for should it happen sooner or later, be greater or less, longer or shorter, the surveyor and his brethren would go near to lose their places. But this is taken care of, for the Mandarines, who are to take the observations, never fail to register them according to the predictions, so that, if they have their fees, the heavens may take their course.

I am afraid, my lord, that I have been too tedious in this digression, your highness, having for these several years been busied in affairs of greater moment, must needs have little regard for such abstruse notions, unfit to excite you to those elevated sentiments so natural to such great souls as yours, and I might have spent my time more to your satisfaction in writing the wars of the Tartars, and the conquest of China. But besides the inclination every man has to speak of what belongs to his profession, I have, perhaps, been overruled by the habit we contract in China to entertain great persons with these matters, and have hoped,

publick buildings in China, but all their beauty consists in a prodigious height, which at a distance makes the finest show in the world. They consist in two large square buildings built separately, but bound together by two tall and very thick walls, so that they form a square which may contain above five hundred men in battle. The first building, which looks like a fortress, faces the road. There is no way thro' it, but you go in at the side wall, where there is a gate proportionable to all the rest; then you turn to the right, and meet with the second tower which commands the city, and has a gate like the former, but whose gate way is so long, that it grows dark towards the middle. There they constantly keep a Corps du Guard, and a small magazine to supply it readily with stores in case of necessity.

If you respect only the neatness of the workmanship, and the ornaments of architecture, I must, indeed, confess, that the gates of Paris are incomparably finer. But ye, when a man approaches Pekin, he must own that these immense buildings, and, if I may speak it, the rudeness of these august buildings have a beauty preferable to all our ornaments. The arches are built with marble, and the rest with very large brick, bound with excellent mortar.

The walls are answerable to their gates, so tall that they hide the whole city, and so thick, that centries on horseback are placed upon them. From place to place, at a bow's shot distance, they are defended with square towers. The ditch is dry, but very broad and deep. All is regular, and as well kept as if they were in continual apprehension of a siege. This, my lord, is a pretty exact description of the chief city of China, remarkable for its extent, large gates, strong walls, sumptuous palace, good garrison (which consists in the best forces of the whole empire) and the number of its inhabitants, but commendable for nothing else.

*What*

What may be said of the rest in general is this, the Chinese divide them into two kinds. Those which are solely designed for the defence of the country they call Cities of war, and the rest Towns of traffick. The fortified places which I have seen are not much stronger than the others, unless it be by their situation, which makes some almost inaccessible. The frontier towns, especially those near Tartary, are somewhat singular, and our missionaries have assured me, that there were several narrow passages so well fortified, that it was almost impossible to force them. I myself have seen some which a hundred men might easily defend against a whole army. Their usual fortifications are a good bulwark, some towers, brick walls, and a large deep ditch, filled with running water. The Chinese are skilled in no other manner of fortification, which we ought not to wonder at, since ourselves knew no better before cannons were in use, which has put us upon inventing new ways of defending our cities, as there were new ones contrived of attacking them.

I confess, my lord, that in viewing all those cities which their inhabitants esteem the strongest in the world, I have often, with no little pleasure, thought with myself how easily Lewis the Great would subdue those provinces, if nature had made us a little nearer neighbours to China, he whom the stoutest places in Europe can at best withstand but during a few days. God has, by an equal and just distribution, given the Chinese but mean soldiers, because no extraordinary actions could be performed there; but to vanquish such enemies as ours, so great an hero was wholly necessary.

It must however be granted, that in the way of fortification the Chinese have outdone all other nations in the prodigious work that defends part of their country. 'Tis that which we call the Great Wall, and which themselves stile Van li Cham, Cham, the wall

wall 10000 stadiums long, which reaches from the eastern ocean to the province of Xa-si: not that its length is so great as they speak; but if you reckon all its windings, it will really appear to be no less than 500 leagues. You must not conceive it as a plain wall, for it is fortified with towers much like the city walls I have mentioned; and in the places where the passes might be more easily forced, they have raised two or three bulwarks one behind another, which may give themselves a mutual defence, whose enormous thickness, and the forts which command all the avenues, being all guarded by great numbers of forces, protect the Chinese from all attempts on that side.

China being divided from Tartary by a chain of mountains, the wall has been carried on over the highest hills, and is now tall and then low, as the ground allowed; for you must not think, as some have imagined, that the top of it is level throughout, and that from the bottom of the deepest vales it could have been raised to be as high as the tallest mountains. So when they say that it is of a wonderful height, we must understand it of the spot of ground it is built on, for of itself it is rather lower than those of their cities, and but four, or at most, five feet in thickness.

It is almost all built with brick, bound with such strong mortar, that not only it has lasted these several ages, but is scarce the worse. It is above 1800 years since emperor Chihohamti raised it, to prevent the insurrections of the neighbouring Tartars. This was at once one of the greatest and maddest undertakings that I ever heard of; for though indeed it was a prudent caution of the Chinese, thus to guard the easiest avenues, how ridiculous was it of them to carry their wall to the top of some precipices which the birds can scarce reach with their flight, and on which it is impossible the Tartarian horse should

should ascend: and if they could fancy that an army could have clambered up thither, how could they believe that so thin and low a wall, as they have made it in such places, could be of any defence?

As for my part, I admire how the materials have been conveyed and made use of there; and indeed, it was not done without a vast charge, and the loss of more men than would have perished by the greatest fury of their enemies. It is said, that during the reigns of the Chinese emperors, this wall was guarded by a million of soldiers; but now that part of Tartary belongs to China, they are content with manning well the worst situated, but best fortified parts of it.

Among the other fortresses of the kingdom, there are above a thousand of the first rate; the rest are less remarkable, and indeed scarce deserve that name; yet all are very well garrisoned, and by that one may judge what vast armies are constantly kept on foot. However, this is not the only part in which China excels other nations, for to consider her only in her military capacity will hardly raise our wonder; but who can enough admire the numbers, greatness, beauty, and government of their trading towns? They are generally divided into three classes; of the first there are above 160, of the second 270, and of the third near 1200, besides near 300 walled cities more, which they leave out as not worth observing; tho' they come but little short of either of them, either in the number of inhabitants or greatness of trade. The greater and lesser villages are numberless, especially those of the southern provinces. In the provinces of Xansi and Xensi they are for the most part surrounded with walls and good ditches, with iron gates, which the country people shut at night, and guard in the day time, to protect themselves from thieves, and from the

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the insults of the foreigners, who are not always to be kept in by their officers.

The largeness of these cities is not less amazing than their number. Pekin, which I have already had the honour to mention to your highness, is not to be compared to Nankim; or, as it is now called, Kiamnim, a town formerly inclosed within three walls, the outermost of which was 16 long leagues round: some works of it are still to be seen, which one would rather think to be the bounds of a province than a city. When the emperors kept their court there, its inhabitants were, no doubt, numberless. Its situation, haven, plenty, the fertility of the neighbouring lands, and the canals made near it, for the improvement of trade, could not but make it a fine city: it has since lost much of its former splendor. However, if you include those who live in its suburbs, and on the canals, it is still more populous than Pekin; and tho' the unarable hills, the ploughed lands, gardens, and vast empty places which are within its walls, render it really less than it seems, yet what is inhabited does still make a prodigious big city.

The streets are not very broad, but very well paved, the houses low, but cleanly, and the shops very rich, being filled with stuffs, silks, and other costly wares: in a word, it is as the center of the empire, where you may find all the curiosities which are any where found in the whole kingdom. There the most famous doctors and the Mandarines, who are out of business, usually settle themselves, having the conveniency of several libraries filled with choice of good books; their printing is fairer, their artificers are better workmen, the tongue more polite, and the accent smother than any where else; and truly no other city were so proper for the emperor's residence were it not for the states advantage that he should reside near the frontiers. It is also famous on other accounts.

the cone begins, so that under the ear it is not above 2 inches thick; which may be measured exactly enough, because they pierce their bells at the top to increase their sound as they fancy. The metal is brittle, and very ill cast, being full of little knobs.

These bells were cast during the ninth reign before this. Each have their particular name; the one being called Tchoui, the Hanger; another, Che, the Eater; a third, Choui, or So, the Sleeper; and a fourth, Si, the Flier; for tho' there are but 3 in the city, the Chinese geographers place a 4th beyond the river Kiam. Now, supposing that a cubical foot of brass weigh 648 l. the bell which I measured should weigh about 90,000, supposing it to be of an equal bigness and thickness. As for the bigness, there is no great difference, but the thickness lessens from the bottom to the top, where, as I have said, it is but two inches thick; so that allowing it to be one with another four inches thick and better throughout, the bell will weigh about 50,000 l. and be twice as heavy as that at Erfort, which father Kircher affirms to be the biggest in the world.

But this is nothing to what there is at Pekin, which can shew seven cast under the reign of the emperor Yonlo, near 300 years ago, weighing 120,000 l. each. They are 11 feet wide, 40 round, and 12 high, besides the ear, which is at least 3 foot in height. This, my lord, I own is surprising, and could scarce be believed, had we not father Verbiest's word for it, who himself has exactly measured them.

But as much as their bells exceed ours in bigness, so much do ours exceed them in sound, whether our metal or way of casting be better. Be pleased however to read what father Magalhaens writes of that which is in the palace at Pekin. *Its sound, says he, is so clear, so pleasant, and harmonious, that it seems to proceed from a musical instrument much rather than a bell.* All  
this

this must be understood comparatively; and perhaps the author had never heard any thing of that kind like it. As for my part, all the bells, I have heard there, have seemed to me to make but a dull, obscure noise, as one may easily imagine, for their clappers are not made of iron but wood. However that be (for it deserves not a longer inquiry) it is certain, that the Chinese have in all their cities very big ones, with which they distinguish the five watches of the night; which they reckon from seven or eight of the clock in the evening: they begin the first with striking once, which they repeat a moment after, and so on till the second watch, then they strike two strokes, and at the third watch three, and so on: so that these bells are as so many repeating clocks, which every other moment inform you what time of night it is. They also use for the same purpose a very great drum, which they beat in the same manner.

These two imperial cities, which I have now been describing, might alone render China deservedly famous, but the metropolis's of most provinces are so big, that each were fit to be the chief of an empire. Sigan, the capital city of Xensi, is three leagues round. I have had the curiosity to measure it myself, which was not difficult; the walls which inclose it making an exact square. Its ditches, which are partly dry and partly filled with water, are very fine; its walls thick and tall, as well as the square towers that defend them; its bulwarks very broad, and its gates, at least some, most stately, and like those at Peking. The city is divided into two parts by an earthen wall, which runs almost from one end to the other. The one half is inhabited by the Tartars, who keep the biggest garrison, tho' in the other, where the Chinese dwell, there are also a good body of troops. There may still be seen an old palace, the residence of the ancient kings of that country, who were  
G powerful,



powerful, not only because of the vast extent of their dominions, but also thro' the bravery and courage of their subjects; for, among all the Chinese, there are not any better proportioned, or more strong, stout, and laborious than these. As for the houses, they are, as every where else in China, low, and not over-well built; their furniture is not so neat as in the southern parts, their varnish not so smooth, their China not so plentiful, nor their workmen so ingenious.

Hamcheu, the chief city of the province of Che-kiam, is also one of the richest and greatest in the empire. The Chinese say it is four leagues round, and, I believe, they tell no lye. The streets are as full of people as at Paris, and the suburbs besides being very large, and the canals crouded with an infinite number of boats, I believe it to be as populous as the greatest cities in Europe. The garrison consists in 10000 men, 3000 of which are Chinese. The water of their canals is not clear, nor their streets broad, but the shops are neat, and the merchants there are reputed to be very rich.

Eastwards from the city runs a river half a league broad, being near the sea, but indeed not very considerable, for a little higher it is but an useless torrent, which runs thro' abundance of rocks. A lake lies close to it to the westwards, which is about two leagues round. The water is clear, but very shallow; deep enough however for some large flat-bottom'd boats, which the Chinese keep there, like so many floating islands, where their young people take their pleasure. In the middle stands an island where they usually land, having built there a temple and some houses for their diversion. Of this lake some relations have made an enchanted place. I have read that it was built round with stately houses and noble palaces. This might be; but if true, a great ~~can-~~ was certainly taken that not so much as the least track

track or memory of it should remain. But perhaps they gave that name to some wooden thatched dwellings, in which *China* does every where abound, then indeed a short while might make great alterations, for time needs not use its utmost efforts to pull them down. However, if this city is not so eminent for buildings, it is commendable for being one of the best situated in the empire, for the prodigious number of its inhabitants, the conveniency of its canals, and the great traffick which is made there in the finest silks in the world.

\* What is surprising in China is, that whereas, being gone thro' one of these cities, you would scarce expect to meet with the like, you are hardly out of sight of it before you are in view of such another. As for example, going along the great canal from *Hambou* you come to *Suchen*, which is not far from it, and, if you believe the inhabitants, contains four leagues in circuit, being indeed of a vast extent. It is also the usual residence of a viceroy, and has as great a trade as any city in the empire. I do not find it to be proportionably as populous as those I have mentioned, but the suburbs and multitude of boats amaze new comers. Those who have the patience to spend a few minutes on the water side, and view the throngs of people that come to cheapen commodities, would imagine it to be a fair, to which the whole empire were crouding, and the officers there, tho' not over strict, are so busied in receiving the customs, that they are obliged to put off, to the next day a great many traders, who come to make their payments. This continual hurry, among the most covetous nation in the world, should, one would imagine, occasion frequent quarrels, but their government is so good, and the Mandarin's orders so strictly observed, that besides abusive language, which the *Chinese* are very fluent, other injuries are seldom offered. Not far from *Suchen*, you

meet with other cities at small distances from each other, some a league and a half, and some two leagues round. As soon as you are come to the river Kiam, you meet with Chinkiam, a town built on its banks, one of whose very suburbs, which lies north-west, is a large German league in circuit; this place is so populous, that, when I passed thro' it, it was no small trouble to me to make my way thro' the crowd, which is usually as great in those streets as here at a solemn procession. Overagainst it, on the other side of the river, stands Qua-chéou another great trading town; a little beyond lies Yamcheu, one of the most remarkable cities in the whole empire, which, according to the Chinese, contains two millions of inhabitants.

If I did not here recal myself, I should unawares describe all the cities of China; but designing only to give your highness a general account of their largeness and number, I shall, without a needless, tedious descending into particulars, assure your eminency that myself have seen seven or eight of them as big at least as Paris, besides several others where I have not been, which I am assured are not less. There are fourscore of the first rank, equal to Lyons or Bourdeaux. Among 260 of the second, above a hundred are like Orleance; and among 1200 of the third, there are five or six hundred as considerable as Rochel or Angoulesme; besides an innumerable quantity of villages greater and more populous than Marenes and St. John de Luz. These, my lord, are no hyperboles, neither do I speak by hear-say; but having travelled in person over the greatest part of China, I hope your highness will favour me so far, as not to question the sincerity of my relation.

I shall conclude with the several ports and havens of China, which do not a little contribute to the increase of its wealth. The Chinese emperors had forbid the entrance of them to foreigners; but the Tartars,

Tartars, more fond of money than of ancient customs, have of late years granted a free access to all nations,

The first beginning southwards is Macao, famous for the great traffick which the Portuguese formerly made there, before the Dutch had expelled them out of the greatest part of the Indies. They still have a fortress in it, but their garrison is small, as indeed they are not able to keep a very great one. Besides, their best way to maintain themselves in this post is, to ingratiate themselves with the Chinese, by a blind obsequiousness to all their commands, which they do very wisely. The town, if I may so call a few houses not inclosed with any walls, is built on a narrow uneven soil, on the point of a small island which commands a good road, where ships, by the means of several other little islands which lie to the windwards, are secure from any storm. The haven is narrow, but safe and commodious. All the customs belong to the emperor; and tho' the Portuguese do still preserve a form of government among themselves, yet they obey the Mandarines in whatsoever bears the least relation to the Chinese.

The second haven of this coast is formed by a pretty wide river, up the which great vessels can go as far as Canton. This place is very convenient for foreigners, because the city supplies them with abundance of all kinds of merchandizes and refreshments: but the Mandarines are not fond of letting them approach too near their walls, lest they should be surprized; or rather, they are unwilling that their merchants should deal with ours, since the Mandarines sell them the European effects underhand, by other persons whom they employ.

The province of Fokien, adjoining to that of Canton, has another celebrated haven, which they call Emoui, from the island which forms it, for it is, properly speaking, but a road lock'd in on the

one hand by the continent, and on the other by the said island. The biggest ships ride here secure, and the banks are so high, that they may come as near the shore as they will. The late great improvement of trade in that city invites to it a considerable number of people, and this port has been judged of such a consequence, that the emperor has for some years past kept there a garrison of six or seven thousand men under a Chinese commander.

The fourth, called Nimpo, lies in the most easterly part of China; there it was we landed. The entrance is very difficult, and wholly impracticable to great vessels, the bar at the highest tides not being above 15 foot under water. That place has nevertheless a very great trade; for thence they make a speedy voyage to Japan, being but two days in their passage to Nangazaki. Thither they carry silks, sugar, drugs and wine, which they exchange for gold, silver and brass.

Nimpo is a city of the first class, and was in former times very remarkable, but has been much damaged by the late wars; however, it daily regains something of its former splendor; the walls are in a good condition, the city and suburbs well inhabited, and the garrison pretty numerous. The town is still full of a kind of monuments, called by the Chinese Paissam, or Pailou, and by us triumphal arches, which are very frequent in China.

They consist in three great arches abreast, built with long marble stones; that in the middle is much higher than the other two. The four columns which support them are sometimes round, but oftener square, made of one only stone placed on an irregular basis. In some no basis is to be seen, whether they never had any, or that thro' age it was sunk into the ground. They have no capitals, but the trunk is fastened into the scaffolding, if we will give

give that name to some figures over the pillars. The frize is better distinguished, but too high in proportion to the rest; they adorn it with inscriptions, beautiful figures, and embossed sculptures; with knots wrought loose one within another, with flowers curiously carved, and birds flying as it were from the stone, which in my mind are master-pieces.

Not that all these arches are of this make; some are so ordinary that they are not worth the seeing; but others there are which cannot enough be prized. Instead of a cornish, they have before and behind large flat marble stones like pent-houses. There are so many of these monuments at Nimpo, that in some places they are more a trouble than an ornament, tho' at a distance they make an agreeable prospect.

I have omitted the haven of Nankim, which, in reason, because of the breadth and depth of the river Kiam, should have been first in order; but no ships put in there at present. I do not know whether the mouth of the said river is now choaked up with sand; but sure I am, that the whole fleet of that famous pyrate, who besieged Nankim during the late troubles, passed it without any difficulty; and perhaps it is to prevent any such accident for the future, that the Chinese will not make use of it, that by degrees it may grow out of knowledge.

This, my lord, is in general what may be said of the ports, fortresses and cities of China, the number of which is so great, that scarce can a traveller distinguish them, they lie so thick together; therefore the Chinese have ever thought that no nation in the world was to be compared to them, much like those people whom the prophet represents, saying,  
*This is that great and glorious city which has subsisted for so many years, and saith, I truly am a*  
 G 4 city,

city, and there is none *besides me*. The Chinese indeed were something excusable in this point, since they knew of nothing beyond the seas of Japan and forests of Tartary; but what we have told 'em, that the west had also its cities and kingdoms, which in several things exceeds theirs, has very much humbled them, being not a little vexed, that their title to universal monarchy should now be questioned, after having enjoy'd it above 4000 years.

Our comfort, my lord, is, that these proud cities, which stiled themselves Ladies of the Universe, have been forced to open their gates to the gospel, and are partly subdued by our religion. \* *Those that dwell in high places have bowed their heads, and the Lord has in a holy manner brought low the lofty cities.* This, my lord, has often supported me in the midst of my labours and travels. I have seen but few cities where christianity had made no progress; and among those crowds of worshippers of Belial, I have observed a chosen people which worshipped the Lord in spirit and truth. Our churches are now the ornament of those very cities, which during so many ages had been defiled with idols; and the cross, raised above their houses, confounds superstition, and gains itself respect from the very Gentiles.

What then remains, my lord, but that we labour with the utmost diligence to the perfecting of a work worthy the zeal of the first apostles. Woe to those who are kept there by the care of the head of the church, and the liberality of christian princes, if thro' negligence, or an ill-grounded cowardice, they fail of rendering the inhabitants of those vast cities a holy nation. Hitherto, thro' God's good grace, the ministers of the gospel have not been ashamed of their profession, not before the pagan magistrates, and when forced by a long exile to quit their beloved churches, they all might with St. Paul say, *You*

*know*

know I have endeavoured to serve the Lord in all humility, with many tears, and notwithstanding the crosses I have met with from the heathen; that I have bid nothing from you that might be to your advantage, no hindrance being strong enough to prevent my preaching it both in publick and private; but rather admonishing you all to be penitent towards God, and faithful to our Lord Jesus Christ.

I know that those, who have composed whole volumes to cry down our catholick missions, will not agree to what I have said. Men, who have once professed themselves enemies to the orthodox doctrine, attack it every where, and make it their business to slander such as preach it: but it may be a comfort to us, that we have no other adversaries but those who are such to our church, and that we are only blamed by those whose praise would be a reproach to us.

However we stand in daily need of the assistance of our kind protectors; for in what part of this world can naked truth and distressed innocence withstand alone the force of inveterate malice? In you, my lord, we hope to find one full of zeal and justice. The approbation of so great a prince, whose wit, judgment, and uprightness are well known to all Europe, is able alone to silence and confound our enemies. And when it is once known that you are in some concern for our affairs, that you are sensible of our labours, persuaded that our designs are good, and willing to contribute to carry them on; none sure will then be so daring and hardened a calumniator as to speak against our missions to China, or reflect on our conduct in that country. I am with profound respect,

My Lord,

Your Eminence's most  
humble and obedient Servant,

L. J.



## LETTER IV.

*To the Count de CRECY.**Of the Climate, Soil, Canals, Rivers, and Fruits of  
CHINA.**My Lord,*

THE French missionaries to China are so highly obliged to your whole family, that among the most important commands, they have honoured me with for Europe, that of returning you their hearty thanks was earnestly recommended to my care.

I know, my lord, that, how great soever your favours may have been, your several employments, and the unbounded application with which you serve his majesty, have somewhat curbed your zeal.

But what is not owing from us to that other self of yours (pardon the expression) whom his blood, name, wit, and a thousand excellent qualifications do so confound with you, that we can scarce distinguish the one from the other? In all our travels in which some of us have already reckoned above 40000 leagues, we have not made a step without his orders and assistance. His zeal has excited us to noble enterprizes, his prudence directed us how to carry them on, his courage strengthened us against all opposition, and I hope his unshaken constancy will at last give success to one of the most noble achievements that this age has produced, to our church's good, to the improvement of learning, and to his glory who sways the Gallick scepter.

Thus, my lord, while you make known his name in the several courts of Europe, he preaches yours abroad thro' the new world, where he is equally revered by the preachers of the gospel, whose support he is, and dreaded by those of paganism and idolatry,

idolatry, whose ruin he is the occasion of. I the more willingly do justice to his merit, because I cannot write on a subject more agreeable to your lordship; and if I had not already spoke of it in private conversation, I were to blame to give over so soon.

But after having indulged a father's tenderness, is it not time you should satisfy a statesman's curiosity? I have often described Europe to the Chinese, who have admired its politeness, beauty, and magnificence; it is but just that I make China known to that European, who is best able to judge of its true grandeur. I have, my lord, pitched upon the following particulars, being such as will give you a true idea of that country, and will, perhaps, give some pleasure in the reading.

China being of a large extent, the nature of the soil is different, according to its particular situation, as it lies more or less southwards. I can however assure your lordship, that the least of its fifteen provinces is so populous and fertile, that in Europe it would make alone a considerable state; and a prince, who should enjoy it, might have wealth and subjects enough to content a moderate ambition.

This land, like all others, is divided into hills and plains; but the latter are so even, that one would think the Chinese have ever since the foundation of their monarchy been employ'd in nothing else but levelling them, and making them into gardens; and their manner of m'liomating the ground being to let water thro' it, they could not devise a better way to distribute it equally; else those parts which lie highest would have laboured under a continual drought, and the rest lain always under water.

This course they take in tilling and manuring their hills, for they cut them out like a pair of stairs from the foot to the top, that the rain water may

may spread equally, and not wash down the ground with its seeds.

Thus they have, as it were, forced nature, by making artificial plains, where she had raised mountains; and a long series of such hills surrounded and crowned, as I may say, with a hundred such terrasses, losing in breadth as they gain in height, and whose soil is as fruitful as that of the best cultivated vallies, must needs make a very entertaining landskip.

It is true that their mountains are not for the most part so stony as ours, their mould is rather light, porous, and easily cut; and, what is most surprizing, so deep, that in most provinces you may dig three or four hundred feet in depth before you come to the rock. This does not a little contribute to its goodness, because the continual transpiration of salt spirits is ever renewing it, and this endues the soil with a perpetual fertility.

Nature has not however been equal in her distribution, she was less lavish to the provinces of Xensi, Honan, Quamtum, and Fokien. Yet even their mountains are not wholly useless, bearing all kinds of trees, which grow tall and streight, and are fit for all kinds of building, especially for shipping. The emperor reserves some for his private use, and sometimes sends 300 leagues for trees of a prodigious bigness, of which he makes pillars to his temples or other publick buildings.

The inhabitants also trade much in them, for having lopt off all the branches, they tie 80 or 100 of them together, and fasten so many such rows one behind another as reach almost a mile, which they drag in that manner along the rivers and canals till they have sold all; for they build them little convenient houses on these kinds of floats, where the timber-merchant, his family, and servants lie during the whole voyage, which is sometimes three or four months long.

They

They have other mountains which are of a greater and more publick advantage Those produce iron, tin, brass, mercury, gold and silver It is true, the silver mines are not now made use of, whether they think the empire is sufficiently stock'd with it, or that they are unwilling to sacrifice the lives of poor people, by putting them upon so laborious and dangerous a task

As for their gold, the torrents wash a great quantity away into the plains, which proves the occasion of a great many peoples livelihood, who have no other occupation than to look for it among the sand and mud, where they find it so pure, that it needs no refining as at Peru

If you will believe the Chinese, who themselves are credulous to an excess, their mountains have wonderful properties Some, they say, are ever covered with clouds, while others always continue calm and serene Some produce none but useful, wholesome herbs, while not a rank poisonous weed can grow there They affirm, that a hill in the province of Xensi is shap'd like a cock, and crows sometimes so loud, as to be heard three leagues off, and that another, in that of Fokien, moves to and fro when a storm approaches, like a tree agitated with the wind The hogry heads of others are covered with a continual frost, and there is one in the province of Kiamsi, called the Dragon Tiger, because the Bonzes pretend that its upper part is shap'd like a dragon, and seems to assault the lower that is like a tiger

That of Fokien especially is admired, the whole extent of which is nothing else but a representation of the idol Foe, so hugely big, that its eyes are several miles broad, and its nose many leagues in length I cannot suppose it to be a piece of Chinese workmanship, for they would not certainly have made its nose so big, who love theirs should be little, which they look upon as a great beauty

The mountain of Xerif is no less wonderful, for at the sound of a drum, or any other instrument, it breaths out fire and flames, raises wind, rains, storms, and what not: and, to conclude, one in the province of Huquam has this strange property, that it makes thieves so giddy, that, should they steal any thing on it, it would be impossible for them to go off with their booty; whereas an easy egress and regress is allowed to such as come thither with an hospitable mind.

China abounds in such like curiosities which some of our philosophers admire, and endeavour to reduce to natural principles; but I should rather advise them to leave that discussion to the Chinese, who, being the authors, should best know the causes of these fancied effects.

The idlest dream, and that to which they give most faith, is, That there is a dragon of an extraordinary strength and sovereign power. It is in heaven, in the air, on the waters, and usually among the mountains. They also believe, that in those mountains live a sort of men which they call the Immortal Race, believing really that they never die; and some are so infatuated with this ridiculous opinion, that they wander among those rocks, and there lose themselves in quest of immortality. There are several famous grotto's where some Bonzes lead a very austere life; but for a few that behave themselves well, abundance, thro' their execrable vices, are grown contemptible to persons of quality, and odious to the people, who only tolerate them thro' a mistaken zeal.

The most famous temples are also built on mountains. Pilgrims repair thither from 200 leagues off, and their number is sometimes so great, that the roads are crowded with them. The women especially are very exact in the performance of this piece of devotion, for having no other opportunity

tunity of going abroad, they are glad of that pretence. But these holy travels being somewhat prejudicial to their virtue, their husbands are not overwell pleased at it; therefore only your ordinary sort of women undertake these pilgrimages; but as for persons of quality, they force their wives zeal into a narrower compass.

If after having viewed their mountains, we take a prospect of their plains, it must be confessed, that no art can equal their natural beauty. They are all cultivated, and have neither hedge nor ditch, nor scarce a tree, so much they are afraid of losing an inch of ground. In most provinces they make harvest twice a year, and between those two seasons they sow herbs and pulse.

All the northern and western provinces, as Peking, Xansi, Xensi, Suchven, bear wheat, barley, several kinds of millet, and tobacco, with black and yellow pease, with which they feed horses as we do with oats. Those of the south, especially Huquam, Nankim, and Chekiam, are fruitful in rice, it being a low, watery country. The husbandmen at first sow it disorderly, like other corn, and when it is grown about two feet from the ground, they pull it up by the roots, and transplant it in a strait line, in small parcels like little sheaves, checquerwise, that the ears may support each other, and the easier resist the wind; so that these plains look more like spacious gardens than a plain field.

The soil is proper for all manner of fruits, it bears pears, apples, apricots, peaches, figs, grapes of all kinds, and especially excellent muscadines. There are also pomegranates, walnuts, chefnuts, and generally all that we have in Europe. Their olives are different from ours; they press no oil out of them, because, perhaps, they are not fit for that purpose, or that the Chinese have not yet thought  
of

of it. Their fruit, generally speaking, is not near so good as ours, being wholly strangers to the art of grafting. But they have three kinds of melons, which are all excellent: The first are small, yellow within, and of a sweet sugar taste, which they eat with the rind as we do an apple: I have not met with those any where but in the province of Xensi. The others are very big and long, the inside of some are white, and of others red; though they are full of a cooling juice which tastes like sugar; they never prove offensive, and may be eaten during the greatest heats of summer, without fear of a surfeit; those are called water-melons. The third sort are like our ordinary melons.

Besides the fruits which they have in common with us, others grow there which are not known in Europe. The most delicate they call Letchi, and is found in the province of Quamtum. It is as big as a nut, the stone is long and big, and the meat on it soft and waterish, but of a most delicious taste. I know not any fruit in Europe that comes near it. All this is inclos'd in a rough thin rind, and the whole is shaped like an egg. It is unwholesome to eat a quantity, and of so hot a nature, as to cause a man's whole body to break out into pimples. The Chinese dry it with the rind, and then it grows black and wrinkled, like our prunes, and so it is preserved and eat all the year round, being used especially in tea, to which it gives a little sharp taste, more agreeable than that of sugar.

In the same province, and in that of Fokien, grows another small fruit which they call Lopyen, Dragon's Eye. The tree that bears it is large as those which produce our walnuts. This fruit is exactly round, the outer rind being smooth and grey, but as it ripens it grows yellowish. The  
meat

meat is white, of a sharp taste, and very full of juice, and is fitter for a dysert to those who have well dined, than to satisfy the hungry stomach : it is very cool and inoffensive

The Seze, another kind of fruit peculiar to China, grows almost in all parts of it, of this, as of apples, there are several kinds. Those in the southern provinces taste much like sugar, and melt in one's mouth. In the provinces of Xansi and Xensi it is more firm, bigger, and may easier be preserved. The rind of the former is clear, smooth, transparent, and of a shining red colour, especially when the fruit is ripe. Some are in shape like an egg, but usually bigger, the seeds are black and flat, and the meat very watery and almost liquid, which they suck out at one of the ends. When they are dried like our figs they become mealy, but in time there grows a sort of a sugar'd crust upon them, from which they receive a most delicious flavour.

Those in Xansi are, as I have said, much more firm, their meat being like that of our apples, but of a different colour. Those they either gather early to ripen them on straw, or dip in scalding water, to free them of an ill soure taste which they have at first gathering. The Chinese are not over careful of this fruit, it being a natural product of the earth which grows in any soil. But did they endeavour to bring it to perfection by grafting, I question not but it might be made an excellent one.

I purposely omit their Ananas's, Goyaves, Coco's and other fruits, for which they are indebted to the Indies, and which have been abundantly described in other relations, but I cannot pass by their oranges, commonly known with us by the name of China Oranges, because the first we saw of that kind came from thence. The first and only tree, out of whose stock all ours are said to be produced, is still preserved at Labon, in the garden of the count



de St. Laurence, and we are indeed beholding, to the Portugueze for that delicious fruit; but they brought only of one kind over, tho' there be several in China.

That which is most valued, and sent as a rarity to the Indies, is no bigger than a billiard ball; the rind is of a reddish yellow, fine, clear, and very smooth; yet the bigger sort seem to me the best; those of Quamtum especially are very agreeable both to our palate and constitution: They are commonly given to sick people, being first softened with the fire, then filled with sugar, which, incorporating with their juice, makes a very sweet wholesome syrup, than which nothing can be better for the lungs. I know not how to distinguish them from those we have in Provence, and that are brought from Portugal, unless by their being more firm, that they are not easily parted from the rind, neither are they divided into segments like ours, tho' else they do not differ in shape.

When I was at Siam, most of my countrymen were transported with the goodness of certain oranges whose rind is rough, thick, almost all over green. They may perhaps be willing to know if China can shew any as good. As to matter of taste, a man does not always agree with himself, much less can he do so with others. All I can say to it is, that each is excellent in its kind, and that usually the last eaten seem best tasted.

Lemons, citrons, and what the Indians call Pampelimouses, are very common there, and therefore not so much regarded as in Europe; but they cultivate with a great deal of care a particular species of lemon-trees, whose fruit being no bigger than a walnut, perfectly round, green and sharp, are excellent in all kinds of ragousts, and these shrubs they often plant in boxes to adorn their courts and halls therewith,

• But of all the trees that grow in China, that which produces tallow is in my opinion the most prodigious. This very proposition is no doubt surprising, and, there being no where else any thing like it, will seem a paradox; yet there is nothing more true, and perhaps, my lord, a particular account of the nature and properties of so extraordinary a tree will not be unwelcome.

It is about the height of our cherry-trees, the branches are crooked, the leaves shaped like a heart, of a lively brisk red, its bark smooth, the trunk short, and the head round and very thick. The fruit is inclosed within a rind divided into three segments, which open when it is ripe, and discover three white kernels of the bigness of a small nut. All the branches are very thick of it, and this mixture of white and red makes at a distance the finest prospect in the world, the fields where these trees are planted, which they usually are in a direct line and chequerwise, shewing a far off like a vast parterre of flower-pots.

But the wonder is, that this kernel has all the qualities of tallow; its odour, colour, and consistency; and they also make candles of it, mixing only a little oil when they melt it to make the stuff more pliant. If they knew how to purify it as we do our tallow here, I doubt not but their candles might be as good as ours; but they make them very awkwardly, so that their smell is much stronger, their smoke thicker, and their light dimmer than ours.

as cotton, increases the smোক, and causes an offensive smell.

Among the trees peculiar to the country I am speaking of, I must not omit those which bear pepper, not like that which we make use of in Europe, but another sort of seed endued with the same qualities. They grow on a tree like those which bear our walnuts, about as big as a pea, and of a greyish colour, with little red streaks; when they are ripe they open off themselves, and discover a little stone as black as jet, casting a strong smell very offensive to the head, for which reason they gather them by intervals, not being able to remain on the tree any considerable time. Having exposed these grains to the sun, they cast away the stone, which is too hot and strong, and only use the rest, which, tho' not quite so agreeable as our pepper, is however of good use in fauces.

That you may better judge of the fertility of that vast empire, be pleased, my lord, to take notice, that there is no place in the world like it for the abundance of roots and pulse; it is almost the only food of the inhabitants, who omit nothing to have them good. It would be too tedious to give you a list of all those different herbs; for besides those we have here, their ground brings forth several others unknown to us, on which they set a greater value. Their care and dexterity herein is beyond all our gardeners performances; and, if our walks excel theirs, they exceed us in their kitchen garden.

Tho' this subject, common in itself, and not worth your notice, yields no great rarity, I cannot forbear speaking of a kind of onions which I have seen; they do not feed like ours, but towards the latter end of the season their leaves bear some small filaments, in the midst of which is a white onion like that in the ground. This does in time produce its leaves, and those a like head, and so on, which grow

grow less and shorter as they are farther from the ground, the dimensions are so just, and the proportions so exact, that one would think them artificially done, and it seems as if nature were minded to shew us that, even sporting, it can exceed the skill of the nicest artist

If what has been written of what they call *Petsi* were true, it would be a great wonder. It is a kind of *Lenufar*, that grows under water, whose root is fastened to a white matter covered with a red skin, that divides itself into several heads, which, when fresh, taste like a small nut. I have been assured that it has this property, that it softens brass, and as it were renders it edible, if a piece of the metal be put into the mouth with one of this plant.

This seemed the stranger to me, because the juice which issues from it is very mild and cooling, and not endued with any of those corrosive qualities which seem necessary to work such an effect. As soon as we were arrived at *Hamcheu*, where this *Petsi* is much eaten, we had the curiosity to inquire into the truth of it, and to that purpose took a piece of their money, which was made of a very brittle sort of molten brass, and wrapp'd it up in a slice of this root; one of us, who had stronger teeth than the rest, broke it into several pieces, which the others, loath to strain their jaws, had not been able to do, but these broken pieces were as hard as ever, which made us think that the root had indeed no other virtue, than that by being wrapp'd round the brass it saved his teeth, which a piece of leather might have done as well. We often repeated the experiment at *Kashan*, but with no better success, so true it is that these mighty wonders should be heard twice. Before they were once believed.

I tho' China were not of use to the world, as I have represented it, the canals, which are

cut thro' it, were alone sufficient to make it so: but besides their great usefulness in watering the country, and farthering trade, they add also much beauty to it. They are generally of a clear, deep, and running water, that glides so softly that it can scarce be perceived. There is one usually in every province, which is to it instead of a roid, and runs between two banks, built up with flat coarse marble stones, bound together by others which are let into them, in the same manner as we use to fasten our strong wooden boxes at the corners.

So little care was taken, during the wars, to preserve works of publick use, that this, tho' one of the noblest in the empire, was spoiled in several places, which is a great pity; for they are of no little use, both to keep in the waters of these canals, and for those to walk on who drag the boats along. Besides these causeys they have the conveniency of a great many bridges for the communication of the opposite shores, some are of three, some five, and some seven arches, the middlemost being always extraordinary high, that the boats may go through without putting down their masts. These arches are built with large pieces of stone or marble, and very well framed, the supporters well fitted, and the piles so small that one would think them at a distance to hang in the air. There are many of these bridges, so that where the canal runs in a straight line, as they usually do, it makes a prospective at once stately and agreeable.

This great canal runs out into smaller ones on either side, which are again subdivided into small rivulets, that end at some great town or village: sometimes they discharge themselves into some lake or great pond, out of which all the adjacent country is watered, so that these clear and plentiful streams, embellished by so many fine bridges, bounded by

such neat and convenient banks, equally distributed into such vast plains, covered with a numberless multitude of boats and barges, and crowned (if I may use the expression) with a prodigious number of towns and cities, whose ditches it fills, and whose streets it forms, does at once make that country the most fruitful and the most beautiful in the world.

Surprised, and as it were astonished at so noble a sight, I have sometimes bore a secret envy to China in Europe's behalf, which must own that it can boast nothing in that kind to be compared to her. What would it be then, if that art which in the wildest and most unlikely places has raised magnificent palaces, gardens and groves, had been employed in that rich land, to which nature has been lavish of her most precious gifts?

The Chinese say their country was formerly totally overflowed, and that by main labour they drained the water by cutting it a way thro' these useful canals. If this be true, I cannot enough admire at once the boldness and industry of their workmen, who have thus made great artificial rivers, and of a kind of a sea, as it were, created the most fertile plains in the world.

It will scarce be believed, that men so ignorant in the principles of physicks, and the art of levelling, should bring such a work as that to perfection; yet it is certain that these canals were dug by men; for they are usually strait, the distribution is equal and orderly; there are flood-gates made for the rivers to let in their water at, and others to let it out when they are too full; so that it cannot be doubted but that the Chinese are only beholding to their own industry for <sup>the</sup> ~~an~~ great convenience.

Among all those canals in the southern provinces, ~~any~~ above the rest is called the Great Canal, because it goes thro' the whole country from Canton, which

lies southward to Peking, situated in the most northerly parts of the empire. You must only travel a short day's journey by land to cross the hill Moilin, that does on one side bound the province of Kiamsi. From this mountain issue two rivers; one runs southwards to the sea, and the other northwards as far as the river of Nankim, whence by the yellow river, and several canals, you may proceed by water to the very mountains of Tartary.

But, by reason in this huge extent of ground, of above four hundred leagues in length, the earth is not level, or, hath not a descent proportionable to the emanation of the waters, it was necessary to set a great number of sluices a work. They call them so in the relations, notwithstanding they be much different from ours. They are water-falls, and as it were certain torrents, that are precipitated from one canal into another, more or less rapid, according to the difference of their level: Now, to cause the barques to ascend, they make use of a great company of men, who are maintained for that purpose near the sluice. After they have drawn cables to the right and left to lay hold of the barque, in such a manner that it cannot escape from them, they have several capstans, by the help of which they raise it by little and little, by the main force of their arms, till such time as it be in the upper canal, in a condition to continue its voyage whither it is bound. This same labour is tedious, toilsome, and exceeding dangerous. They would be wonderfully surprised, should they behold with what easiness one man alone, who opens and shuts the gates of our sluices, makes the longest and heaviest laden barques securely to ascend and descend.

I have observed in some places of China, where the waters of two canals or channels have no communication together, yet for all that, they make the boats to pass from the one to the other, notwithstanding

ing the level may be different above fifteen feet - and this is the way they go to work. At the end of the canal they have built a double Glacis, or sloping bank of free-stone, which, uniting at the point, extends itself on both sides up to the surface of the water. When the barque is in the lower channel, they hoist it up by the help of several capstans to the plane of the first Glacis, so far, till, being raised to the point, it falls back again by its own weight along the second Glacis, into the water of the upper channel, where it skids away during a pretty while, like an arrow out of a bow, and they make it descend after the same manner proportionably. I cannot imagine how these barques, being commonly very long and heavy laden, escape being split in the middle, when they are poised in the air upon this acute angle, for, considering that length, the lever must needs make a strange effect upon it, yet do I not hear of any ill accident happen thereupon. I have pass'd a pretty many times that way, and all the caution they take, when they have no mind to go ashore, is, to tie themselves fast to some cable for fear of being toss'd from prow to poop.

We meet with no such sluices in the grand canal, because the emperor's barques, that are as large as our frigots, could not be raised by force of arm, nay, and would infallibly be split in the fall, all the difficulty consists in surmounting these torrents, of which I have spoken, yet this is what they perform successfully, tho' not without some trouble and expence.

These water passages, as they call them, are necessary for the transportation of grain and stuffs, which they fetch from the southern provinces to Peking. There are, if we may give credit to the Chinese, a thousand barques, from eighty to an hundred tun, that make a voyage once a year, and are all of them freighted for the emperor, without counting



counting those of particular persons, whose number is infinite. When these prodigious fleets set out, one would think they carry the tribute of all the kingdoms of the East, and that one of those voyages alone was capable of supplying all Tartary wherewithal to subsist for several years; yet for all that, Pekin alone hath the benefit of it; and it would be as good as nothing, did not the province contribute besides to the maintenance of the inhabitants of that vast city.

The Chinese are not only content to make channels for the convenience of travellers, but they do also dig many others to catch the rain-water, wherewith they water the fields in time of drought, more especially in the northern provinces. During the whole summer, you may see your country people busied in raising this water into abundance of small ditches, which they contrive across the field. In other places they contrive great reservoirs of turf, whose bottom is raised above the level of the ground about it, to serve them in case of necessity. Besides, they have every where in Xensi and Xansi, for want of rain, certain pits from twenty to an hundred feet deep, from which they draw water by an incredible toil. Now, if by chance they meet with a spring of water, it is worth observing how cunningly they husband it; they sustain it by banks in the highest places; they turn it here and there an hundred different ways, that all the country may reap the benefit of it; they divide it, by drawing it by degrees, according as every one hath occasion for it, insomuch that a small rivulet, well managed, does sometimes produce the fertility of a whole province.

The rivers of China are no less considerable than its canals, there are two especially, which the nations have made famous. The first is called *Y. Xim*

or Yamçé, which they commonly translate the Son of the Sea: But I am afraid they are mistaken; for the letter, with which the Chinese write Yam, is different from that which signifies the Sea, altho' the sound and pronunciation may have some affinity: amongst several significations that this letter may have, that which they gave it in former times makes for our purpose. Under the reign of the emperor Yon, it signified a province of China, limited by this river on the north; and it is somewhat probable, that they gave this same name to the river, because the prince drain'd all the water that overflow'd the whole country into it.

This flood takes its rise in the province of Yunnan, crosses the provinces of Suchven, Huquam, and Nankim; and after it hath watered four kingdoms, far and wide for 400 leagues together, it disimbogues into the east sea, overagainst the isle of Cummim, which was made by the sand and mud which this river bears along with it; the Chinese have a proverb amongst them, that says, "The Sea hath no bounds, and the Kiam no bottom.†" And, in truth, in some places there is none to be found; in others, they pretend there is two or three hundred fathom water. I am nevertheless persuaded, that their pilots, that carry not above fifty or sixty fathom cord at longest, never had the curiosity to sound so deep as three hundred fathom; and the impossibility of finding the bottom, with their ordinary plummet, is sufficient, in my opinion, to incline them to such like hyperbole's.

I have many times sailed upon this river; I have moreover diligently observed its course and breadth from Nankim to the mouth of another river, into which men enter to pursue their way to Canton. It is off of Nankim thirty leagues from the sea, a little

little half league broad ; the passage along it is dangerous, and becomes more and more infamous every day for its shipwrecks. In its course, which is exceeding rapid, it forms a great number of isles, all of them very beneficial to the province, by reason of that multitude of bulrushes ten or twelve foot high, that it produceth, serving for fuel to all the cities thereabouts ; for they have scarce wood enough for buildings and ships. They yield a great revenue, and the emperor draws considerable duties from them.

The rivers, which the torrents of the mountains do sometimes swell extraordinarily, grow so rapid, that many times they bear away the isles with them, or lessen them by the half, and form other new ones in some other place ; and one cannot but admire to see them change place in such a short time, just as if by diving they had pass'd under water from one place to another. These great alterations do not always happen ; but there is observed such considerable change every year, that the Mandarines, lest they should be mistaken, get them to be measured every three years, to augment or diminish the imposts or duties, according to the condition they are found to be in.

The second river of China is called Hoambo, as much as to say, the Yellow River, because the earth it sweeps away with it, especially in times of great rains, gives it that colour. I have seen a great many others, whose waters, at certain seasons of the year, are so over charged with slime, and so gross and thick, that they rather resemble torrents of mud than real rivers. The Hoambo takes its source at the extremity of the mountains that bound the province of Suchven in the west : from thence it throws itself into Tartary, where it flows for some time all along the great wall, at which it re-enters China, between the provinces of Xansi and Xasxi.

After that it waters the province of Honan, and when it hath run cross one part of the province of Nankim, and flowed above 600 leagues into the land, it disimbogues at length into the east sea, not far from the mouth of Kiam. I have cross'd it, and coasted it in diyers places; it is every where very broad and rapid, yet neither deep nor navigable to speak of.

This river hath in former times caused great desolation in China, and they are still forced, to this very day, to keep up the waters in certain places by long and strong banks, which notwithstanding does not exempt the cities thereabouts from apprehensions of inundation. So likewise have they been careful in the province of Honan, the ground lying very low thereabouts, to surround the greatest part of the cities, about a mile from the walls, with a terrass, cas'd with turf, to prevent being surpris'd by accidents and casualties in case the bank be broken, as happened about fifty-two years ago. For the emperor, endeavouring to force a rebel (who, for a long time laid close siege to the city of Honan) to draw off, caused one part of the banks to be broken down, thereby to drown the adverse army. But the relief, he afforded the city, proved more fatal than the fury of the besiegers would have been; the whole province almost was laid under water, together with many cities and abundance of villages, above three hundred thousand persons drowned in the metropolis, amongst ~~from~~ were some of our missionaries, who at that time had a numerous flock of christians, and thereby lost their church and their lives.

The low country ever since is become a kind of a marsh or lake; not but that they have some design to repair this loss, but the undertaking is difficult and very expensive. The sovereign court, that takes care of ~~publick~~ works, importuned the emperor more ~~that~~ once to send father Verbiest thither, and peradventure

venture, that prince would have consented thereto at last, but he discovered that the Mandarinés made use of this pretence, to remove the father at a distance from court, and that their design was to engage him in a difficult enterprize, that was enough to destroy him; or out of which he could never have disintangled himself with any honour.

There is to be seen in China abundance of other rivers less famous, but yet more commodious for commerce and trade.

Since they afford nothing uncommon, it would be to abuse your patience, sir, to descend to the particulars. As to what concerns fountains, it were to be wish'd there were more of them, and better. 'Tis certain that their usual waters are not good, which, perhaps, hath obliged the inhabitants, especially in the southern provinces, to drink it always warm; but because warm water is unpalatable and nauseous, they bethought themselves of putting some leaves of a tree to it, to give it a gusto. Those of tea seemed to be the best, and so they frequently make use of it.

It may be also, that God Almighty, whose providence hath so universally provided for the wants of his people, and, if I may be bold to say it, for their delight and pleasure, would not deprive China of that which is necessary to life; so that for to supply the defect of wells and fountains, which the nature of the ground hath made every where salt and brackish, he hath been pleased to produce that species of a particular tree in abundance, ~~whose~~ leaves serve not only to purge the waters from their noxious qualities, but also to make them wholesome and pleasant.

We are assured that there are to be found in China, amongst fountains, several that flow and ebb as regularly as the sea doth; whether it be that they have some communication with the ~~ocean~~ by certain subterraneous conveyances and conduits, or  
whether

whether it be in passing through certain earths, they are impregnated with salts and spirits apt to cause this fermentation, I leave others to determine.

Since I have begun to speak of the different waters of China, I cannot pass over in silence the lakes and ponds that are every where almost to be seen in all the provinces. Those, that are produced in winter by the torrents from the mountains, lay waste the fields, and render the whole country during summer barren, sandy, and full of flints. Those, that arise from springs, abound in fish; and yield a considerable revenue to the emperor by the salt they afford. There is one of them amongst the rest, if I be not mistaken it is in Xanfi, in the middle whereof appears a *small island*, where people divert themselves, during the excessive heat, cooling themselves, by throwing water into the air and making artificial rain. They find here a crust of a certain salt very white, and of a pleasant scent, which they continue all the summer long, with that success, that the salt would be sufficient for the whole province, if it were as salt as that of the sea; they commonly make use of it to season meat withal.

Altho' I have not seen all those famous lakes in China, whereunto historians ascribe so many miracles, yet shall I relate something which I do not care to warrant for gospel; which, nevertheless, will let you understand the genius of the country, where people easily give credit to what seems most incredible.

In the province of Fokien there is one whose water is green, and changes iron into copper. They have built a palace upon the banks of another not far distant from the former, in an apartment of which one hears the ringing of bells every time Heaven threatens a storm. There are waters in the province of Quentum that change colour every year. In summer and in winter they are very clear; in autumn they

they turn blue, but of such a fine blue, that people make use of it to dye stuffs.

In that place is to be seen a mountain full of caverns, whose very aspect is very terrible, in which is found a lake of that nature, that, if one throw a stone into it, one may hear a noise like thunder; sometime after there ariseth a gross mist, which immediately dissolves into water.

But the most famous of them all is, that of the province of Yunnan. The Chinese would make you believe that this lake came all on the sudden, during an earthquake that swallowed up all the country with its inhabitants. This was a just judgment upon them for their wickedness, for they were very dissolute livers. Of all that were there at that time, there was but one child that was saved, which they found in the middle of the lake borne up upon a piece of wood.

In the isle of Haynan, belonging to China, there is a sort of water, whether it be lake or fountain, I know not, that petrifies fish. I myself have brought over crawfish, that, preserving their intire natural figure, are so far changed into stone, that the claws and body of them are very hard, very solid, and little differing from stone. These wonders of nature are not so far particular to China, but the like may be met with elsewhere; and if one does not credit all the Chinese relate, it is not because there is sometimes no foundation for their stories; but because they have somewhat of the air of fable and hyperbolical in them, that would make a man even suspect the truth itself.

I wish, with all my heart, sir, I were able to explain all the kinds of fish that the rivers and lakes furnish them with, as well as those that are caught upon their coasts (so that I might fully satisfy the subject I have undertaken) but to tell the truth, I am not well enough informed to do so.

myself upon a particular relation of them, I have seen, as far as I can guess, all the fish in China, that we have in France. I have taken notice of a great many others that I did not know, not so much as their names, that is all I can say of it besides that I shall confirm to you, what possibly you may have read in the relations touching the fish they call the golden and silver fish, that are found in divers provinces, which are a great beauty and ornament to the courts and gardens of great persons.

They are commonly of a finger's length, and of a proportionable thickness, the male is of a most delicate red, from the head to the middle of the body, and further, the rest, together with the tail, is gilded, but with such a glittering and burnish'd gold, that our real gildings cannot come near it. The female is white, its tail, and one part of its body, perfectly wash'd over with silver; the tail of both of them is not even and flat as that of other fish, but fashioned like a nosegay, thick and long, which gives a particular grace to this pretty animal, and sets it off, being besides perfectly well proportioned.

Those, who would breed them, ought to have great care, for they are extraordinary tender, and sensible of the least injuries of the air. They put them into a great basin, such as are in gardens, very deep and large, at the bottom of which they are wont to place an earthen pot turned upside down, full of holes on the sides, that they may retire into it when it is very hot weather, and by that means shelter themselves from the sun. They likewise throw upon the surface of the water some particular herbs that keep always green, and maintain the coolness. This water is to be changed two or three times a week, yet so that fresh water may be put in, according as the basin is emptied, which must never be left dry. If one be obliged to remove the

fish



fish from one vase to another, great care must be taken not to touch them with the hand; all those that are touched die quickly after, or shrivel up; you must for that purpose make use of a little thread purse, fastened at the upper end of a hoop, into which they are insensibly engaged; when they are once got into it of themselves, one must take heed of hurting them, and be sure to hold them still in the first, which empties but slowly, and gives time to transport them to the other water. Any great noise, as of a cannon, or of thunder, too strong a smell, too violent a motion, are all very hurtful to them; yea, and sometimes occasion their dying; as I have observed at sea every time they discharged the cannon, or melted pitch and tar: besides, they live almost upon nothing; those insensible worms that are bred in the water, or those small earthly particles that are mix'd with it, suffice in a manner to keep them alive. They do, notwithstanding, throw in little balls of paste now and then, but there is nothing better than a wafer, which steep'd makes a kind of pap, of which they are extremely greedy, which indeed is very suitable to their natural delicacy and tenderness. In hot countries they multiply very much, provided care be taken to remove their eggs, which swim upon the water, which the fish most commonly eat: They place them in a particular vase exposed to the sun, and there they preserve them till the heat hatcheth them; the fish come out of a black colour, which some of them keep ever after, but it is changed by little and little in other colours, into red, white, gold, and silver, according to their different kind: the gold and silver begins at the extremity of the tail, and expand themselves somewhat more or less, according to their particular disposition.

All this, sir, and other marvels of the universe, makes us acknowledge the finger of God every where,

where, who for our sakes hath embellished the world many thousand ways. He is not only content to enlighten the heavens, and enrich the earth, but descends into the abysses, into the very waters, where he hath left some footsteps of his profound wisdom, and not to mention those prodigious monsters, that seem to be made to astonish nature, he hath likewise created those wonderful fish I but now described, which, as little as they are, yet by their singular beauty are the subject of our admiration, and furnish us with some faint ideas of the greatness of the wise Creator.

Thus I have presented you, sir, in a compendium, the draught, and as it were the map of that country, which I design'd to give you some knowledge of, these are but the outside, and, if I may so say, but the body of that empire, whose soul and spirit is dispers'd thro' its inhabitants. Peradventure, when you shall have read what I have writ to you about it, you will be apt to inquire what people they be who are so happy as to receive the greatest, *fertilest*, and most fertile portion of the earth for their inheritance, such a land, in a word, that it wants nothing to make it a real Land of Promise, but to be cultivated by God's people, and inhabited by true Israelites indeed. If we had nothing, as the Hebrews had, but the red sea and wilderness to go through, probably forty years might suffice to bring it under subjection to the gospel: but that vast extent of seas, those infinite and unpracticable land journeys, that were capable of putting a stop to Moses and the prophets, are a great stop to the zeal of the ministers of Jesus Christ, and lessen the number of his new apostles.

Oh! that I could, as the Hebrews did, whom Moses sent to discover the Promised Land, represent the immense richness, and most precious harvest that Christ promises to the labourers in the vineyards, we

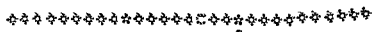
have hopes that probably the prospect of such an abundant crop might in time prevail with all Europe to come and reap it; at least, I hope that my testimony will not be insignificant, and that the more than ordinary zeal of the small company of missionaries, that shall succeed me, will make amends for the vast number of those which such a vast empire might demand. I am, with all the respect imaginable,

S I R,

*Your most humble,*

*and most affectionate Servant,*

J. L. J.



## L E T T E R V.

*To the Marquis de Torsi, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.*

*Of the peculiar Character of the Chinese Nation its Antiquity, Nobility, Manners, and its good and bad Qualities.*

*My Lord,*

SEeing in the employment wherewith the king hath honoured you, and which you do already discharge with so much wisdom, nothing can contribute more to promote you to that high pitch of perfection, that all Europe expects from you, than the exact knowledge of the manners and genius of foreigners, I could imagine no less than that, by ordering me to write to you concerning the empire of China, you did particularly desire to learn what was the character of its inhabitants.

It is true, if we judge of the future by preceding reigns, such informations would perhaps stand you in no stead. Hitherto France hath had nothing to do with that people, and nature seems to have placed them at such a distance from us, on purpose that we might have no concern with them. But under the reign of Lewis the Great, for whom nature herself hath so often changed her laws, is any thing impossible? Nay, will not Heaven, which seems to have employed all nations to make him renowned, oblige China, as proud and haughty as it is, to contribute something to his glory?

It is in all human probability, under your ministry, my lord, that we shall behold the most flourishing and mighty empire of the West, unite itself with the most puissant realm in all Europe. And perhaps, if it had not been for this fatal war, the dire consequences of which have expanded themselves as far as the extremities of the universe, you would e're this have given audience to the envoys of a prince, who never acknowledged any other sovereign besides himself in the world. This negotiation, so glorious for you, and so much conducing to the establishment of religion, which the iniquity of the times hath hitherto interrupted, may be hereafter set afoot again; and it is on purpose to dispose and incline you to the same, that I presume to take the liberty, my lord, to let you understand the character of those who are to be employed therein.

The Chinese are so ancient in the world, that it fares with them as to their original, as with great rivers whose source can scarce be discovered. It is necessary for that purpose, to look back farther than all our prophane histories, for their chronology surpasses even the common account of the creation of the world.

It is very true, the vulgar history of that grand monarchy is not only dubious, but manifestly false,

for it computes forty thousand years since the foundation of the empire, but the account, given by the learned and judicious among them, comes so well confirmed, so evidently proved, and established by so constant a tradition, that one cannot call it in question among them, without passing for ridiculous, and as they themselves express it, for heretical.

According to this history, which none of their learned men ever questioned, China hath had its kings for above four thousand years, that have continued to this present time without any interruption. The same family hath not been always seated upon the throne, there have been twenty two different families, that have produced two hundred and thirty six emperors. Several doctors carry this monarchy back six hundred years higher; their opinion depends on probable grounds, but we may rely upon the first; which makes very much for the grandeur and nobility of China, since five or six hundred years, more or less, does not produce any notable diminution in its antiquity.

Certainly, after all the inquiries and examinations that have been made into this chronology, it is no longer left to our liberty to doubt of it, than of the histories that are the most authentickly received amongst us. and it ought so much the rather to be believed, forasmuch as it was incapable of admitting any alteration from foreigners; forasmuch as it was always current amongst the knowing men of the country, for true, sure, and uncontested, because it is written in a natural, plain, unaffected style, that carries with it that air of verity that ever persuades and besides, Confucius, esteemed for his great capacity, sincerity and uprightness, never doubted of it, nay, and did even establish his whole doctrine thereupon, five hundred and fifty years before the birth of our Saviour, because his books are very conformable to the holy scripture, in reference to  
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the age of the first men, for they assure us that Tshu reigned an hundred and fifty years, Chunnum, an hundred and forty, Hoamti, an hundred and eleven, Yao, an hundred and eighteen, and so for the rest, always decreasing, conformable to what holy writ teaches us. In a word, the eclipses, observed at that time, must needs happen in effect, which they could not know, but by observation, and not by any calculations, since they never had exact ones. All this persuades us that there is little certainty in the prophane history of the world, if we can reasonably doubt of that of China.

In a word, this empire was involved in the common fate of all others, whose origin is very inconsiderable. It seems probable that the children, or grand children, of Noah dispers'd themselves into Asia, and at length penetrated as far as this part of China, that is most westerly, which is called at this day Xansi and Xensi. They lived at the beginning in families, and the kings were fathers, to whom a long continuance of years, abundance of flocks, and other country pastoral riches added some authority.

Fohi was the first that had the foundation of the monarchy, his wisdom, discretion, his good morals, power, and reputation, which his great age had acquired him, made them give ear to him, as to an oracle. he regulated all private, as well as polittick and religious matters, inasmuch that the state was in a very flourishing condition in a short time, his subjects possessed the province of Honan at first, and some years after all the lands and territories that are extended as far as the south sea.

It is probable that the Chinese, from their very original, did look upon themselves as something more than other men, like to those princes, who, as soon as they are born, discover a certain natural

loftiness that ever distinguishes them from the vulgar. Whether it was that the neighbouring kingdoms were barbarous, or inferior to them in point of wisdom, I don't know, but at that very time they laid down a maxim of state amongst themselves, *To have no commerce with foreigners and strangers, but just so much as should be necessary to receive their homage*. Neither did they court and seek after these badges of sovereignty out of a spirit of ambition, but that they might have the better opportunity to prescribe to other people of the world laws and constitutions of perfect government.

So that when any one amongst their tributaries failed to appear at the time appointed, they did not oblige him by open force to submit, but on the contrary had compassion on him. *What do we lose by it, say they, if he still remain barbarous? Since he is so averse as wisdom, he needs to blame no body but himself as often to be shall fail in his duty thro' passion or blindness*.

This grave policy acquired the Chinese so great a reputation, that throughout all the Indies, all Tartary and Persia, look'd upon them as the oracles of the world, yea, and the people of Japan had such an high conceit of them, that when St Xavier brought the faith amongst them (altho' China at that time came short of her pristine probity) one of the great reasons, they objected against the good man, was, that a nation so wise, so intelligent, had not yet embraced it.

But this piece of policy that induced them to distinguish themselves from others, which at first might probably be a profitable maxim, degenerated afterwards into pride. They look'd upon themselves as a chosen elect people, that Heaven had produced in the center of the universe to give them a law, a people only capable to instruct, civilize, and govern nations. They fancied other men but as dwarfs and pitiful monsters, thrown by into the extremities of the

the earth, as the dross and off scouring of nature; whereas the Chinese, placed in the middle of the world, had alone received from God Almighty a rational form and shape, and a true size. Their ancient maps are filled with such like figures, and with a great many emblems apt to inspire that disdain they shewed of all mankind.

But perceiving the Europeans instructed in all sorts of sciences, they were struck with astonishment. *How can it possibly be, said they, that a people so far remote from us should have any wit or capacity? They have never perused our books; they were never modell'd by our laws, and yet they speak, discourse, and argue aright as we do.*

Our workmanship, as stuffs, clocks, watches, mathematical instruments, and such like curiosities, surpris'd them still more, for they imagin'd, that dextrous and expert artificers were no where to be met with but in China. Then they began to understand, that we were not so barbarous as they imagin'd, and said in a joking way, *We supposed all other people blind, and that nature had bestow'd eyes upon none but the Chinese, but we find now, that this is not universally true, if the Europeans do not see so clearly as we, they have at least one eye apiece.*

I have had notice of some Frenchmen so moved at this ridiculous vanity, that they were not masters of their passion, they would possibly have done better to have laugh'd at this vanity, or at least have excus'd it, since the Chinese, till that time, had seen none but Indians and Tartars, and they beheld the West at a distance, as we at present beheld the Terra Australis Incognita, and forests of Canada. Now, if at 300 leagues distance from Quebec we found Iroquin mathematicians, or learned Alkonks, that could discover to us a new philosophy, more clear, comprehensive, and more perfect



fect than ours, we should be no less blame-worthy than the Chinese, for preferring ourselves to that people, and for having hitherto termed them Barbarians

Abating this pride, you must confess that the Chinese nation hath been endued with rare qualities, with a great deal of politeness in managing the affairs of the world, with great sense and regularity in their business, with much zeal for the publick good, true and just ideas of government, with a genius, mean indeed as to speculative sciences, but yet right and sure in morality, which they have always preserved very conformable to reason

The people principally applied themselves to the education of children in their families, they esteemed agriculture above all other things, they were laborious to excess, loving and understanding commerce and trading perfectly well. Judges and governors of cities affected an outside gravity, sobriety at their tables, moderation in house keeping, and equity in all their judgments, which gained love and respect from all the people in general. The emperor placed his happiness in nothing more than to procure it for his subjects, and looked upon himself not so much a king of a mighty state, as a father of a numerous family

This character of China, my lord, <sup>that</sup> I have given you, is not flattering, <sup>but</sup> faithfully deduced from its own history, that <sup>richly</sup> furnishes us with an infinite number of examples of the conspicuous wisdom that hath been so long the soul that actuates its government. 'Tis true indeed, the civil wars, the weak, or wicked kings, and the power of foreigners, have from time to time disturbed this goodly order whether the fundamental laws of the state were excellent, or the people from their cradles endued with happy dispositions, is not material; but it is most certain, these fatal and troublesome intervals

intervals did not long continue, if so be they were but never so little left to their own disposal, they flowed again in their former course, and we see at this very day, in the midst of that corruption, which the domestick troubles and commerce with the Tartars have introduced, some footsteps of that ancient probity remaining

I do not pretend, my lord, to enlarge any further upon this subject. I know very well that it is a letter that I have the honour to write to you, and not a history, besides, they are about translating into French that history which the Chinese themselves have given us, and I am confident it will please, not only by its novelty, but by the extraordinary matters it contains

I thought it enough in this place to draw you out the portraiture of the present state of China, in relation to the manners and customs of its people. I could decypher it in a few words, by telling you that they live there as we do in Europe. Avarice, ambition, and pleasure go a great way in all their transactions. They cozen and cheat in traffick, injustice reigns in sovereign courts, intrigues busy both princes and courtiers. In the mean time, persons of quality take so many measures to conceal vice, and the out works are so well guarded, that if a stranger be not careful to be instructed concerning affairs, to the bottom, he imagines that every thing is perfectly well regulated. Herein the Chinese resemble the Europeans, in other respects they are wholly unlike. Their countenance, air, language, disposition, civilities, manners, and behaviour are not only different from ours, but also from all that we can find in all other nations of the world

Without doubt, my lord, you have taken notice of the figures that are painted upon the porcelain dishes and cabinets that come from China,

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our pictures in Europe do always flatter us, but those of China make them maimed and ridiculous. They are not so ill-favoured as they make themselves: they do not indeed entertain the same ideas of beauty which we do. They would have a man big, tall, and gross; they would have him have a broad forehead, eyes little and flat, a snort nose, great ears, a mouth of a middle size, a long beard, and black hair. That curious feature, that lively aspect, that stately and noble gate and deportment the French so much esteem, does not at all please them. He is a handsome man that fills an elbow chair, that by his size and bulk can look big. As for their colour, they are naturally as fair as we, especially towards the North; but being the men take no care of themselves, travel much, wear upon their head nothing but a little bonnet, very improper to defend their face from the sun-beams, they are commonly as tawny as the Portuguese in the Indies: the people also of the provinces of Quamtum and Yunnan, by reason of the excessive heat, and working half naked, are of a dun complexion.

As much as the men neglect themselves in this particular, so much do the women take all the care imaginable to preserve themselves. I am not sure if painting be usual with them, but I have been told that they rub their faces every morning with a sort of white meal, which rather spoils than mends their complexion. They have all of them little eyes, and short noses; in other things they come nothing short of the European ladies, but their modesty, so natural to them, doth infinitely set off their handsomeness; a little collar of white sattin, fastened to a vest, keeps them light, and covers their neck all over. Their hands are always hid in long sleeves; they tread softly and gingerly, with their eyes upon the ground, their

their head on one side, and a man would imagine, to look on them, that they were a company of nuns or devotees by profession, set apart and sequester'd from the world, only taken up in the service of God. So that it is observable, that custom hath many times more power to perplex and trouble the fair sex, than the most austere and rigid virtue nay, and it were a thing to be desired, that christianity were able to obtain from christian ladies here, what the practice of the world hath for so many ages inspired into the idolatrous Chinese.

This modesty, nevertheless, does not hinder them from that vanity incident to their sex, the more they are confined, the less they love solitude, they dress themselves gorgeously, and spend all the morning in making themselves fine, thinking they may be seen in the day time, altho', perhaps, they are not by any one, but their own domesticks. Their head dress, which usually consists of several locks buckled up, interlaced with flowers of gold and silver, makes but an odd kind of a figure. But I neither can, nor will, my lord, give you a particular description of it, because, I know you do not expect it from me. However, I am persuaded, if people should see the model of it as in France, they would go near to be tempted to quit that extravagant burden of head cloaths which they wear, and dress themselves after the neatness and simplicity of the Chinese.

The ladies wear, as men do, a long tatten or cloth of gold vest, red, blue, or green, according to their particular fancy, the elder sort habit themselves in black or purple; they wear, besides that, a kind of surtout, the sleeves whereof are extremely wide, and trail upon the ground, when they have no occasion to hold them up. But that which distinguisheth them from all the women in the world,

world, and does in a manner make a particular species of them, is, the littleness of their feet, and here lies the more essential point of their beauty. This is one of the most wonderful and strange things in the world. They affect this to that degree, that they would justly be accused of folly, did not an extravagant and ancient custom (which, in the business of the mode, evermore prevails over the greatest convenience) oblige them to follow the stream, and comply with the custom of the country.

So soon as ever the girls are born, the nurses take care to tie their feet extremely hard, that they may not grow. Nature, that seems to be disposed for this torment, does more easily buckle to it than one could imagine, nay, one does not perceive that their health is impaired thereby. Their shoes of satin, embroidered with gold, silver, and silk, are extraordinary neat, and tho' they be very little, yet they strive to shew them as they walk, for walk they do (which one would not be apt to believe) and would walk a day long by their good will, if they had liberty to go abroad. Some have been persuaded that it was an invention of the ancient Chinese, who, to bring women under a necessity of keeping within doors, brought little feet in fashion. I have more than once inquired about it of the Chinese themselves, but they never heard of any such reason. *These are idle tales*, says one of them, smiling, *our forefathers knew women too well, as we do, to believe, that, in retrenching half of their feet, they could be deprived of the power of walking, and of longing to see the world*.

If people would have given themselves the trouble to have consulted the relations concerning the aspect and mien of the Chinese women, it would not have been so easy a matter to impose upon the easiness of the ladies of Paris, who entertained a poor Frenchwoman the last year, giving her all manner

manner of relief, because she said she was an outlandish woman, and of one of the best families in China. This accident surprised all curious persons, and the marquis de Croisi told me, he would take it as a favour if I would examine the truth of the story.

Charity, added he, is no less acceptable to God, altho' it be misplaced upon objects that deserve it not. If the business of giving the money were the only thing in question, it would be scarce worth the while to detect the fraud where a person pretends necessity but in the case before us, the maid said she was a heathen, that she was exhort-ed long since to be converted, that she understood rightly, or at least pretended to understand our mysteries, in fine, she desired to embrace our religion, and they were just upon the point to baptize her. If she be a Chinese, well and good, we have cause to admire divine providence for bringing this soul from so remote a place, to be admitted into the bosom of the church, but if she be a Frenchwoman, who, probably hath been baptiz'd from her infancy, this abuse of the sacrament that she is going to receive a second time, is a sacrilege deserving the severest punishment, of which sacrilege those that assist her become guilty themselves.

find her, when I appeared ; they sought for her all up and down a good while, and at length unken-  
nell'd her, and persuaded her to make her appearance.

So soon as I saw her, I had no need of examina-  
tion ; the features of her face, her gait, her feet,  
her whole behaviour betray'd her. She feign'd in  
speaking French, that she did not well understand  
the language ; but, besides that the placing of  
the words, which she endeavoured to pronounce con-  
fusedly, 'was altogether natural, which is scarce ever  
got by strangers, she did also pronounce, with a great  
deal of firmness, several letters not in use with the  
Chinese, which it is impossible for them to express.

After the first discourses, I demanded of what  
province, and what family of China she was, and  
by what strange adventure she was at such a great  
distance from her country ? *I am of Peking itself,*  
says she, *the metropolis of the empire, born in the*  
*emperor's palace, brought up at court, and daughter*  
*to prince Coronné : A prince who does dispose so-*  
*vereignly every thing ; more master, and more*  
*powerful than the emperor himself ; whose pleasures*  
*are never interrupted by the cares of publick affairs ;*  
*who, being little concerned at the good or bad con-*  
*dition of the empire, confines all his ambition to the*  
*rendering himself happy, and to lead an easy and*  
*pleasant life.*

*I embarked with my mother, who had a design to*  
*pass into Japan, there to treat of a marriage for me.*  
*In the passage, our vessel was attacked by a Holland*  
*pirate, that took it, and blew it up ; and brought me*  
*away prisoner. However, the barbarous pirate took*  
*such care of me, as did something sweeten my captivity,*  
*if the loss of my mother had not reduced me to a discon-*  
*solate condition, for she died before my eyes ; and the*  
*representation of so fatal an accident, that lay eight*  
*and day heavy upon my spirit, would scarce permit*  
*me to reflect upon the many kind offices he did me.*

Never.

Nevertheless, my condition was not so deplorable as I imagined, the victorious Hollander was at length overcome by a French privateer. I was a second time a captive, and treated by the new captain with so much harshness, that I was at that very moment apprehensive that my grief might increase, and that the excess of miseries, that one endures in this world, is never so great but one may become still more miserable. This voyage was to me the longest, most dangerous, and accompanied with much sorrow and bitterness. At length we came ashore at a place which I knew not, they brought me out of the ship, and, after they had dragged me through several provinces, they barbarously forsook me, and I found myself destitute, comfortless, and without any support, in the middle of this great city, which I hear called Paris.

'Tis true, Heaven hath not quite forsaken me, the word Pekin, the only word by which I could make known my country, brought me out of misery. Some ladies, at the hearing of this word, were moved with compassion, took me into their house, and have ever since treated me with so much charity, that I do not know if I ought to complain of fate that hath conducted me into so good hands.

She had indeed some cause to be well pleased with her lot, much better in effect, than she could reasonably expect. They treated her as a maid of some noble family, nay, it was an hundred pound to a penny but they had given her the quality of princess Coronné, a name much better known in France than China, where this is yet unknown. They told me moreover that divers persons were impatient to do her a kindness, and that Monsieur N. one of our most famous writers, had already composed three extraordinary eloquent letters in her name, one for the emperor, another for prince Coronne, and the third for some other prince of her family. He hath, without doubt, what he deserved from the persons

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that



that engaged him in it; yet I do not believe that China will ever thank him for it.

For my part, my lord, I do confess that the bare recital of this adventure appeared to me somewhat fabulous, and carries with it an air romantick enough to undeceive those, whom an excess of charity had not quite blinded. Prince Coronné is a chimera, that hath not the least appearance of truth in it. The birth of a maid in a palace, where there is none but eunuchs, is still more hard to be believed. The Hollanders are not at war with the Chinese, and it is not their best way to fall out with them, by assaulting their ships.

The Chinese dames, that scarce ever ~~find~~ out of their houses, do not care for undertaking long voyages at sea: and the match they were going to manage is no more likely than that a princess of France should embark at Brest, to sail into the Indies to espouse some Mandarin of Siam.

Besides, we know all the vessels that we have taken from the Hollanders, as well as those that are arrived in France from the Indies: we know the captains of them, we know their prizes, their engagements, their adventures, and yet we hear not one word of what our Chinese relates. Now, if she be so unfortunate as to be found in the streets of Paris miserable, forlorn, and unknown, she ought not so much to lay the fault upon our French people, as upon her ill fortune that took no care to place her better in this world.

But to convince all those who were present at our interview, I put divers questions to her about the principal cities in China; I examined her concerning the money, their writing, the characters and language of the country. She told me she had often travelled from Peking to Nankim in less than three days, notwithstanding it is above three hundred leagues from one to another; that they used gold money,

money, altho' gold is no where current through all the empire but as precious stones are in Europe, that the silver coin was stamp'd as ours is, round, flat, bearing the emperor's arms, with divers figures according to the custom of eastern nations, notwithstanding the silver hath no regular figure, they cut it into ingots, they reduce it to what form they please without arms, order, or ornament, they clip it into great pieces, as occasion serves, and it is only by weight, not by the emperor's mark, that they know its value

I writ down some Chinese characters, for she had boasted that she could read, a person of her quality durst not say the contrary, but the misfortune was, she mistook herself, and took the paper at the wrong end, boldly reading the letters, turned upside down, as if they had been right upon the whole, that which she pronounced had no manner of relation to the genuine sense of the writing At last I spoke Chinese to her, and, for fear lest she might avoid the difficulty, I acquainted her that I spake the Mandarin language so current throughout the empire, which they constantly use at the court She was so impudent as to frame *ex tempore* a wild ridiculous gibberish, but so little understood, that it was evident she had not time enough to make it hang well together, so that, not being able to understand what I said to her, I should have been fore put to it to explain what she meant, it indeed she did mean any thing

After this trial and examination, she might blush for shame, and ingenuously confess the imposture, but she still keeps up her conversation without being concerned, and with such an air of confidence, that would make any one judge that this China romance was not the first story she had made

I thought, my lord, that you would be very glad to be acquainted with this, besides that it may as

ford you some pleasure, it will also serve to let you understand that the mind, countenance, and behaviour of the Chinese women have no affinity with those of the Europeans; and that a French woman must needs be brazen-fac'd, when under the borrowed name of a Chinese she pretends to impose upon persons who have, as long as I have done, seen both nations.

After this little digression you may be willing I should take up my former discourse again. The mens habits, as every where else, are there much different from the womens; they shave their heads all over, except behind, where they let as much hair grow as is needful to make a long tress. They do not use a hat as we do, but wear continually a bonnet or a cap, which civility forbids putting off.

This bonnet differs according to the different seasons of the year: that which they use in summer is in form of a cone, that is to say, round and wide below, but short and strait above, where it terminates in a mere point. It is lined within with a pretty sattin, and the top covered with a very fine mat, very much esteemed in the country. Besides that, they add thereto a great flake of red silk, that falls round about, and reaches to the edges; so that, when they walk, this silk flows irregularly on all sides, and the continual motion of the head gives it a particular pleasing grace.

Sometimes in lieu of silk they wear a sort of long hair, of a vivid shining red, which rain does not deface, and is more especially in use amongst men when they ride. This hair comes from the province of Suchven, and grows upon the legs of certain cows; its natural colour is white, but they give it a tincture, that makes it dearer than the finest silk. In winter they wear a plush cap, bordered with a sable fox-skin; the rest is of a curious sattin, black or purple, covered with a great flake of red silk,

*the French ; in fourteen hundred years, which is, as long as the monarchy hath continued, there have been above fourteen hundred modes. So that perhaps there is not that habit in the world, that should seem strange to you ; and all that we can say, when any mode that is presented to you displeases you, is, that it is out of fashion.*

’Tis true, the Chinese are not so fickle as we, but they have carried on things to another extremity ; for, rather than forsake their ancient habit, they renewed a cruel war against the Tartars ; I, and the greatest part of them chose rather to lose their heads than their hair : but of all the excesses in point of mode, none is more phantastical than this ; for how ridiculous soever the Chinese may fear to look, after they have parted with an head of hair, yet they might be convinced that a man, whose head is lopp’d off, is worse disfigured. However, we must grant that the constancy of this people is admirable, for, when the Tartars attacked them, they had kept their habit for above two thousand years, which can be ascribed to nothing but the good order observed in the empire, the government of which hath always been uniform, where the laws have been exactly observed in the least punctilio’s.

But as I am persuaded these ways would not please all our French people ; so the modes, of which we are so fond, do not appear so handsome to the Chinese as we imagine ; but above all, the periwig does strangely run in their mind ; and they look upon us as a sort of people, who for want of a beard, would get an artificial one clapp’d to the chin, that should reach to the knees. This phantastical head-dress, say they, and that prodigious heap of curled hair, are proper upon the stage for a man that would represent the devil ; but has on the shape of a war, when he is thus disguised ? Thus the Chinese po-  
sitiveness ;

liteness will go near upon this article alone to arraign us of barbarity

They have likewise much ado to be persuaded, that long shanks discovered, with a stockin drawn strait, and narrow breeches, look handsome, because they are accustomed, to an air of gravity that gives them other conceptions. They would sooner be reconciled with the figure of a magistrate shaven, without a perwig, who should in his lawyers gown go booted, than with all that gaiety of attire, that makes our cavaliers have a fine shape, an easy and fine gait, a quick and disingaged carriage, which will by no means go down with them. This ridiculousness pleases, and one is oftentimes offended at real prettiness, according as prejudice or custom have differently changed the imagination, there is notwithstanding in all these modes some other intrinsic real beauty, which naked simplicity, which nature in her innocence, and exempt from passion, have inspired into men, for the necessity and conveniency of life.

Altho' persons of quality observe exactly all the formalities and decencies suitable to their state, and never appear uncovered in publick, how great soever the heat be, yet in private, and among their friends, they assume a freedom even to a fault, they ever and anon quit their bonnet, furtout, vest and shirt, reserving nothing but a single pair of drawers of white taffaty, or transparent linnen, which is the more surprising, because they condemn all nakedness in pictures, and are even offended that our engravers represent men with their arms, thighs, and shoulders uncovered, they seem to be in the right, for being displeased at the unchristian license of our workmen; but yet they are ridiculous to blame that upon a piece of linnen or paper, which they practise themselves with so much liberty and decency in their own proper persons.

As for the vulgar, they transgress in that respect  
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all the bounds of modesty, especially in the southern provinces, where watermen, and certain other handicrafts men, are impudent to the highest degree, and in truth the most barbarous Indians, notwithstanding the climate seems to excuse them, appeared to me in this respect less barbarous than the Chinese, almost all the artificers and inferior tradesmen go along the streets with single drawers, without cap, stockings, or shirt, which makes them much tanned and swarthy. In the northern provinces they are a little more reserved, and the cold, in spite of their teeth, makes them modest, and keep within bounds.

After having described to you the modes of China, perhaps you may be desirous, my lord, that I should speak of their stuffs. What I have observed of them in general is this, their silk, without question, is the finest in the world, they make of it in many provinces, but the best and fairest is to be found in that of Chekiam, because the soil is very proper for mulberry trees, and because the air is endued with a degree of heat and moisture, more conformable to the worms that make it. Every body deals in it, and the traffick of it is so very great, that this province alone is able to supply all China, and the greatest part of Europe.

Yet the finest and fairest silks are wrought in the province of Nankim, the rendezvous of almost all the good workmen. It is there that the emperor furnisheth himself with the silks spent in the palace, and with those he presents the lords of the court, the silks of Quantum, notwithstanding, are valued above all among strangers, and the silks of this province are also more saleable, and go off better than those of all the other provinces of China.

Altho' all these silks have some resemblance to ours, yet the workmanship hath something in it that makes a difference. I have there seen plush, velvet, tissue of gold,

gold, sattin, taffaty, crapes, and several others, of which I do not so much as know the name in France, that which is the most current amongst them is called Tounze, it is a sort of sattin, stronger, but not so glossy as ours, sometimes smooth, and sometimes distinguished by flowers, birds, trees, houses, and shady groves

These figures are not raised upon the ground by a mixture of raw silk, as our workmen are used to do in Europe, which makes our work not so durable, all the silk in these is twisted, and the flowers are distinguished only by the difference of colours, and shadowing, when they mix gold or silver with it, it does much resemble our brocado, or flower'd silk, but their gold and silver is wrought after a manner particular to them alone, for whereas in Europe we draw the gold as fine as possibly it can be twisted with the thread, the Chinese, to save the matter, or because they did not bethink themselves of this trick, satisfy themselves to gild or silver over a long leaf of paper, which they afterwards cut into little scrowls, wherein they wrap the silk

There is a great deal of cunning therein, but this gilding will not last long, water, or even moistness itself, will tarnish the splendor of it quickly, yet for all that, when the pieces come out of the workman's hands, they are very fine, and one would take them for valuable pieces. Sometimes they are contented only to put into the pieces these little scrowls of gilded paper, without rolling them upon the thread, and then the figures, altho' pretty and finely turned, do not last so long by far and the silk thus flower'd is at a lower rate

Amongst the different figures they represent, the dragon is most ordinary, there be two sorts of them, one, to which they make five claws, called Lom, is only used upon the stuffs designed for the emperor, this is his arms, which Tohi, founder of  
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the empire, first took for himself and successors above four thousand years ago. The second sort of dragons hath but four claws, and is named Mam. The emperor Vouvam, who reigned two thousand eight hundred thirty two years ago, ordained that every body might bear the same; and, since that time, the use of it is grown common.

They make use of another kind of stuff in summer, which the Chinese call Cha; it is not so close, nor hath so good a gloss as our taffaty, but much more substantial; altho' several people desire to have it smooth and even, yet most wear it powdered with great flowers pierced through, and cut like your English lace; and many times these piercings are so numerous, that one can scarce discern the body of the silk. The summer garments are extraordinary convenient, and wonderful neat, so that all persons of quality use them; besides the taffaty is not dear, a whole piece, enough to make a long vest and furtout, will not amount to above two guineas.

The third is a particular sort of taffaty, that serves for drawers, shirts, linings, they call it Tcheouze; it is close, and withal so pliant, that fold, double it, and squeeze it with your hand, as long as you please, you can scarce ever rumple it. It is sold by weight, and is so serviceable, that they wash it as they do linnen, without losing much of its former lustre.

Besides the ordinary silk of which I but now spoke, which we know in Europe, China hath of another sort, which you meet with in the province of Quantum. The worms from which they take it are wild, they go to seek for them in the woods; and I am not sure, whether or no they breed them in houses. This silk is of a grey colour, void of any gloss, so that those, who are not well acquainted with it, take the stuffs that are made of it for red linnen, or for one of the coarsest druggets; yet for



for all that they infinitely value it, and it costs more than sattin, they call them Kien Tcheou; they will endure a long time; tho' strong and close, yet they do not fret; they wash them as they do linnen; and the Chinese assure us, that spots cannot spoil them, and that they do not so much as take oil itself.

Wool is very common, and withal very cheap, especially in the provinces of Xensi and Xansi, and Suchyen, where they feed abundance of flocks, yet do not the Chinese make cloth. That of Europe, wherewith the English furnish them, is highly esteemed; but, by reason they sell it much dearer than the finest silks, they buy but little of it. The Mandarines make themselves studying gowns for the winter of a kind of coarse russet, for want of better cloth. As for druggets, serges and tammies, we scarce meet with better than theirs; the Bonzes wives do commonly work them, because the Bonzes make use of them themselves; and there is a great trade driven of them every where in the empire.

Besides cotton linnen, that is very common, they use also for the summer nettle linnen for long vests; but the linnen which is the most valued, and is to be found no where else, is called Copou; because it is made of a plant that the people of the country call *Go*, found in the province of Fokien.

It is a kind of creeping shrub, whose leaves are much bigger than ivy-leaves; they are round, smooth, green within, whitish, and cottony, or downy, on the outside; they let them grow and spread along the fields. There be some of them as thick as your finger, which is pliable, and cottony as its leaves are. When it begins to dry they make the sheaves of it to rot in water, as they do flax and hemp; they always peel off the first skin, which they throw away; but of the second, which is much more  
fine

fine and delicate, they divide it by the hand into very slender and very small filaments, without beating or spinning it, and make that linnen of which I spake; it is transparent, pretty fine, but so cool and light, that one would think he had nothing on his back.

All persons of quality make long vests of it during the excessive heat, with a furtout of Cha. In the spring and autumn they put on Kien-tcheou, and Touanze in winter, that is to say, coarse sating, or flowered silk. Grave persons desire to have it plain, others wear it flowered; but nobody, except the Mandarines in the assemblies, or upon certain solemn visits, uses silk flower'd with gold or silver. The vulgar, that usually habit themselves in coarse linnen dyed blue, or black, quilt it with cotton, or line it with sheepskin during the cold weather; but great persons line their vests and furtouts with the noble skins of sable or ermine, fox or lamb: they use also for the same purpose plush and petit-gris.

Because ermine is very rare in China, they content themselves only to border their vests and extremity of their sleeves with it; that, \* which I have seen, did not appear to me to be of a fair white.

Sable is pretty well known in France, but much less common there than in China, where all the considerable Mandarines wear it: one skin only of a foot long, and between 4 and 6 inches broad, (for the † animal is but small) will sometimes cost 10 crowns; but when one chooseth some of the finest for a compleat habit, the whole lining of a vest will cost between 5 and 6000 livres; yet one may have a pretty handsome one for 200 pistoles.

Fox-skins are likewise much used, those who would be magnificent take nothing but the belly of this animal, where the hair is long, fine, and softest;

\* They call it *Is Chu*.

† They call it *Tiaochu*.

softest, and, of a great number of small pieces patched together, they compose an entire lining, which for the vest and furtout comes to a matter of 5 or 600 livres.

There are also several other sorts of furs that Tartary perhaps supplies them withal, which the Mandarines make use of to sit upon the ground, especially at the palace when they wait, and expect the time of their audience. They put some of them also under the quilt, not only to heat the bed, but also to take away its dampness. Besides, there is another \* fur of a particular species, that is perfectly handsome and fine, the hair of it is long, soft, and very thick set, it is of a pretty whitish grey mixed with black, striped with black and yellow lists, as those of tigers, they make great winter gowns of them to wear in the city, putting the fur on the outside, so that when the Mandarines are thick and short (which is very common with them) besides two furs underneath for the vest and furtout, when, I say, they have put on their back one of these furred gowns with long hair, they differ but a little from bears, or from the animal of whom they borrowed the skin, altho' in this condition they think themselves to be very genteel, and to make a graceful figure.

Of all the furrings, the most common are lamb-skins † They are white, downy, and very warm, but burthensome, and, at first, of a strong smell, in a manner like those greasy gloves that smell of oil. I wonder they bring not up the mode in France, those, who delight in slender fine shapes, would not submit to it, yet otherwise there is nothing more genteel, nor more convenient for winter.

Upon the whole, if great caution be not used, all these furs are easily spoiled, especially in hot and moist countries, worms breed in them, and the hair falls off.

of: to prevent them, the Chinese, so soon as ever the summer approaches, expose them to the air, for for some days, when it is fair and dry weather; then they beat them with sticks, or shake them often, to get out the dust; and when they have inclosed them in huge earthen pots, into which they throw corns of pepper, and other bitter drugs, they stop it up very close, and there let them lie till the beginning of winter.

Besides their usual garments, there are yet two sorts that deserve to be known: They put on one to defend them from the rain; for the Chinese, who delight in travelling, spare for no cost to travel commodiously; they are made of a coarse taffety, crusted over with a condensed oil, which is in lieu of wax, which, being once well dried, makes the stuff green, transparent, and extraordinary genteel: They make bonnets of it, vests, and furtouts, that resist the rain for some time; but it gets thro' all at last, unless the garment be a choice one, and carefully prepared. The boots are of leather, but so little that the stockins are spoiled at the knee, except one be a horseback, like the Tartars, with their legs doubled up, and their stirrups extremely short.

The mourning habit hath also something odd in it. The bonnet, vests, furtout, stockins and boots are made of white linen, and from the prince to the most inferior handicrafts-men, none dare wear any of another colour. In close mourning the bonnet seems phantastick, and very difficult to be represented; it is of a red and very clear canvas cloth, not much unlike the canvas we use for packing up goods. The vest is kept close with a girdle of canvas; the Chinese, in this posture, do at the beginning affect a careless behaviour, and grief and sorrow seems painted all over the outward man; but, all being nothing but ceremony and affectation with them, they easily put on their own face again; they can laugh and

and cry both in a breath ; for I have seen some laugh immediately after they had shed abundance of tears over the tomb of their fathers.

Perhaps, my lord, you may have the curiosity to know, after what manner the missionaries, who labour about the conversion of the infidels, are habited ; the laws, that suffer no foreign mode to take place, determined the first jesuits to take the garb of the Bonzes at the beginning : but this garb, tho' grave and modest enough, was so cried down by the ignorance and irregular life of those wicked priests, that that alone was sufficient to deprive us of the company and correspondence of honest people.

In effect, nothing was so diametrically opposite to religion : so that, after a long deliberation, they thought it more advisable to take the student's habit, which, together with the quality of European doctor, did capacitate us to speak to the people with some authority, and to be heard by the Mandarines with some respect. From that very time, we had free access every where, and God did so far vouchsafe a blessing to the labours of our first missionaries, that the gospel in a short time was propagated with considerable success. )

But in the late revolution of the empire, these fathers, as well as the Chinese, were forced to go habited in the Tartarian fashion, as I told you. When we visit the Mandarines upon account of religion, we were forced to wear a vest and surtout of common silk ; but at home, we were clothed in serge or painted linnen.

So that, my lord, preserving as much as lies in us the spirit of poverty suitable to our condition, we endeavour to *become all things to all men*, after the apostle's example, *that we may the more easily win over some to Jesus Christ* ; being persuaded, that, as to a missionary, the garment, diet, manner of living,

and exterior customs ought all to be referred to the great design he proposes to himself, to convert the whole earth. A man must be a Barbarian with Barbarians, polite with men of parts; austere and rigid to excess among the Indian penitents, handsomely dress'd in China, and half naked in the wilderness of Maduré, to the end that the gospel always uniform, always unalterable in itself, may the more easily insinuate itself into the minds of men whom in holy compliance and conformity to customs, regulated by Christian prudence, have already prepossess'd in favour to us. I am, with the most profound respect,

*My Lord,*

*Your most humble,*

*and most obedient Servant,*

*L. J.*

## LETTER VI

*To the Duchess of Bouillon*

*Of the Oeconomy and Magnificence of the Chinese.*

*Madam,*

**T**HE earnest desire I have observed in your grace, to be fully informed of the present state of the missions in China, hath been in infinite satisfaction to me but I confess, I was a little surpris'd, that, when this new world abounds with so many curiosities, you should chiefly desire an account of the Chinese gallantry and magnificence. I know very well that this is the usual subject of discourse among the ladies, and I could have almost expected no more from any other of your sex.

*Bu.*

But for you, madam, when I had the honour to see you, I have prepared materials of a quite different nature: I made account you would discourse with me concerning the ingenuity, sciences, and politeness of this people: and whereas travellers do usually affect to prefer what they have seen amongst foreigners, to that which is found in their native soil, I pleased myself, that I could sincerely and safely tell you, that the French ladies (I mean those, who like you have raised themselves above those toyish cares, that do in a manner totally possess the fair sex) have more wit, capacity, and a more raised genius, even in the solid and substantial sciences, than all the great doctors of that empire: for, as for politeness, I can scarce believe, madam, that you can doubt of it, since one need not be accomplished with half the politeness you are mistress of, to deface and eclipse the most polite courts of the East.

But since, either by chance, or by your own choice, you have been pleased to confine yourself to another subject, and that you desire a methodical account of what I have had the honour to relate to you of it; I shall obey you, madam, not only with that profound respect I owe to your quality and merit, but also with all the sentiments of grateful acknowledgment which the many honours and favours, I have received from your graces, can inspire me with.

The Chinese come far short of us in the magnificence of their houses, besides that, the architecture is not beautiful, nor the apartments spacious, they do not study to adorn them, and that chiefly for two reasons: The first is; Because all the palaces of the Mandarin's belong to the emperor, he lodges there; and in some places (I cannot say in all) the people furnish them. The people, to be sure, are always at as little expence as they can, and the Mandarin's do not care to ruin themselves by furnishing

nishing palaces, that they are every day in danger of forsaking, because their places are properly nothing but commissions, which are many times taken away upon the least fault.

The second reason is fetch'd from the custom of the country, which does not allow to receive visits in the inner part of the house, but only at the entrance in a Divan they have contriv'd for the ceremonies. It is a banqueting-house all open, that hath no other ornament besides one single order of columns of wood painted or varnished, which they use only to uphold the beams and timber, that often appears under the tiles, nobody taking care to cover it with a cieling. So that it is no wonder if they retrench all the superfluous ornaments of their apartments, seeing foreigners and strangers scarce ever set foot in them; they have neither looking-glasses, tapestry hangings, nor wrought chairs: gildings are not in fashion, saving only in some of the emperor's or prince of the blood's apartments. Their beds, which amongst them are one of the principal ornaments, never come in sight; and it would be a piece of gross incivility to carry a stranger into a bed-chamber, even when you pretend to shew him your house.

Insomuch that all their magnificence may be reduced to cabinets, tables, varnish'd skreens, some pictures, divers pieces of white sattin, upon which there is writ in a large character some sentence of morality, which is hung here and there in the chamber, together with some vessels of porcelain; neither have they occasion to use even them as we do, because there is no chimney to be seen in the chamber.

Nevertheless, these ornaments, if skilfully managed, are very fine and beautiful: varnish, which is so common in China, is dispers'd all over; it takes all colours, they mix flowers of gold and silver with it, they paint men, mountains, palaces, huntings, birds, combats, and several figures, that make a

bass



basis relief in the work, and renders it extremely pleasing and delightful, so that in this point the Chinese make a great show with a little charge.

Besides the brightness and lustre which is the property of varnish, it hath moreover a certain quality of preserving the wood upon which it is applied, especially if they do not mix any other matter with it. Worms do not easily breed in it, nay, and moisture scarce ever penetrates it, not so much as any scent can fasten to it; if during meals there be any grease or pottage spilt, if it be presently wiped with a wet clout, one not only finds no remainders or signs of it, but does not so much as perceive the least smell.

People were mistaken when they fancied that varnish was a composition, and a peculiar secret; it is a gum that distils from a tree, much what after the same manner as rosin doth. In the tuns wherein it is transported, it resembles melted pitch or tar, excepting only that it hath no smell when it is used. There must be oil mix'd with it, to temper it more or less, according to the quality of the work.

For tables and ordinary chairs, it is sufficient to lay on two or three layers of varnish, which makes it so transparent, that one may discern every vein of the wood thro' it. Now, if you would hide all the matter on which you are at work, you must do it over and over again, till at length it be nothing but ice, but so fine at first, that it may serve for a mirror. When the work is dry, they paint upon it several figures in gold, silver, or any other colour; they go over that again, if they please, with a slight touch of varnish, to give them a lustre, and the better to preserve them.

But those, who would perform a finishing stroke, give upon the wood a kind of pasteboard, composed of paper, packthread, lime, and some other substance well beaten, with which the varnish incorporateth.

They compose a ground of it perfectly even and solid, upon which is applied the varnish by little and little, in little stratum, which they dry one after another. Every workman hath a peculiar secret to perfect his work, as in all other occupations. But in my opinion, besides the dexterity and slight of hand, and the due tempering the varnish, that it may be neither too thick nor too thin, patience is what contributes the most to the well succeeding in this operation. There are very pretty curious cabinets at Tumkim; but what are brought to us from Japan, are herein no way inferior to the China-work.

As for porcelain, it is such an ordinary moveable, that it is the ornament of every house; the tables, the side-boards, nay, the kitchen is cumber'd with it, for they eat and drink out of it, it is their ordinary vessel: there are likewise made huge flower-pots of it. The very architects cover roofs, and make use of it sometimes to incrustate marble buildings.

Amongst those that are most in request, there are of three different colours; some are yellow; yet tho' the earth be very fine, they appear more coarse than the others; and the reason is, because that colour does not admit of so fine polishing; it is used in the emperor's palace. Yellow is his own proper colour, which is not allowed to any person to bear; so that one may safely say, that, as for the business of porcelain, the emperor is the worst served.

The second sort is of a grey colour, with abundance of small irregular lines in it, that cross one another, as if the vessel was all over striped, or wrought with inlaid or Mosaick work. I cannot imagine how they form these figures; for I have much ado to believe that they are able to draw them with a pencil. Perhaps, when the porcelain is baked, and yet hot, it is exposed to the cold air, or they infuse it in warm water that opens it in that manner, on all sides, as

celain, which shews like a mirrour ; so that, beholding it near to some other objects, their colours are seen in it ; and this reflection alone is capable of making one pass a wrong judgment upon its native whiteness ; it must be carried into the open air, if you would understand its beauty or faults perfectly. Altho' this varnish be perfectly incorporated with the matter, and tho' it is ~~miraculously~~ lasting, yet it tarnishes at long run, and loseth that brisk splendor it had at the beginning, from whence it comes to pass, that the whiteness appears more taking and pretty in old porcelains ; not but the new ones for all that are as good, and will in some time assume the same colour.

The smoothness and fineness of them consist in two things, in the brightness of the varnish, and evenness of the matter. The varnish should not be thick, otherwise there will be a crust introduced, which will not be incorporated enough with the porcelain ; besides, its lustre will be too great and sprightly. The matter is perfectly equal and even, when it has not the least bump, when there is to be observed in it neither grain, rising, nor depression : There are few vessels but have some one of these defects ; there must not only be found no spots nor flaws, but notice must be taken whether there be some places brighter than others, which happens when the pencil is unequally poised ; which sometimes also happens when the varnish is laid on, if every part be not equally dry ; for the least moisture causeth a sensible difference therein.

The painting is not one of the least beauties of the porcelain ; for that purpose one may make use of all colours, but commonly they use red, and much more blue. I never saw any vessel whose red was lively enough ; it is not because the Chinese have not very lovely red, but perhaps, because the most lively and subtil parts of this colour are imbibed by the roughness

ness of the matter on which it is laid for the different grounds contribute much to the heightening or lessening the lustre of the colours. As for blue, they have it most excellent, however, it is very difficult to hit upon that exact temperature, where it is neither too pale, deep, intense, nor too bright. But that which workmen most diligently seek after is, to perfect the extremities of the figures, so that the colour do not extend beyond the pencil, to the end that the whiteness of the porcelain may not be sullied by a certain bluish water, which flows, if special care be not taken from the colour itself, when it is not well pounded, or when the matter on which it is laid hath not attained a good degree of dryness, much after the same manner as happens to paper that blots when it is moist, or when you write with naughty ink.

It were well if the Chinese designs in their painting were a little better. Their flowers are pretty well, but their human figures are monstrous, which disgrace them among strangers, who imagine, that they are in effect as monstrous in their shape, as they appear in the pictures, yet those are their usual ornaments. The more regular designs and skilful draughts would be less pleasing to them than these anticicks.

To make amends, they are very ingenious and expert in turning their vases well, of what size soever they be. The figure of them is bold, well proportioned, perfectly round, nay, and I do not believe that our skilfullest workmen are able to fashion the great-pieces better, they, as well as we, put a great value upon ancient vases, but for a reason quite different from ours, we value them because they are fairer, they for their antiquity, not but that the artists are as expert, and the matter as good now as heretofore: there are very fine ones made at this day; and I have seen at some Mandarines' houses whole

whole services that were superfine. But the European merchants do no longer trade with the good workmen, and, having no skill in them themselves, they accept whatsoever the Chinese expose to sale; for they vend them in the Indies. Besides no body takes care to furnish them with examples of draughts, or to bespeak particular pieces of work beforehand. If Mr. Constance had lived, we should quickly have known in France that China had not lost the secret of making porcelain: but this is not the greatest loss we have sustained by his death; what religion suffers by it, through all the East, will scarce give us leave to take notice of the alterations it hath caused in arts and trading.

There is yet another reason that makes the curious porcelain so rare; the emperor has constituted in the province, where the manufacture chiefly is, a particular Mandarin, whose care it is to make choice of the fairest vases for the court; he buys them at a very reasonable rate, so that the workmen, being but ill paid, do not their best, and are not willing to take any pains for that which will not enrich them. But should a private man employ them, who would not spare for cost and charges, we should have at this day as curious pieces of workmanship, as those of the ancient Chinese.

The China ware that is brought to us from Fokien, does not deserve the name of it; it is black, coarse, and is not so good as our Fayance. That which is most look'd upon is that which is made in the province of Quamsi, the clay is found in one place and the water in another, because it is clearer and cleaner; perhaps also, this water they make use of before any other, because it is impregnated with some peculiar salts, proper to purify and refine the clay, or by the more strictly uniting the parts, as it happens in mine, which is good for nothing, if it be not flaked in some certain waters, whereas others make it more compact, strong, and adhering.

In brief, it is a mistake to think that there is requisite one or two hundred years to the preparing the matter for the porcelain, and that its composition is so very difficult; if that were so, it would be neither so common nor so cheap. It is a clay stiffer than ordinary clays; or rather a kind of a soft white stone, that is found in the quarries of that province. After having wash'd the pieces of it, and separated the heterogeneous earth that may chance to be mix'd with it, they bray it small till it be reduc'd to a subtil powder. How fine soever it may appear, yet they continue pounding it for a long time; altho' by the touch no difference is to be perceived, yet they are perswaded that it is indeed made much more subtil, that the insensible parts are less mix'd, and that the work thereby comes to be whiter and more transparent. Of this subtil powder they make a paste, which they knead, and beat a long while likewise, that it may become softer, and that the water may be the more perfectly incorporated therewith. When the earth is well moulded, they endeavour the figuring of it. It is not likely that they use moulds, as they do in some other sorts of potteries; it is more probable that they fashion them upon the wheel like us. So soon as their work pleases them they expose it to the sun, morning and evening; but take it away again when the sun grows too hot, for fear of warping it. So the vases dry by degrees, and they apply the painting at their leisure, when they judge the ground proper to receive it; but because neither the vases nor the colours have sufficient lustre, they make a very fine broth or ly of the matter of the same porcelain, wherewith they pass several strokes upon the work, that gives them a particular whiteness and lustre; this I call the varnish of the porcelain. They assured me in the kingdom of Siam, that they mix'd with it some common varnish, with the composition

position made of the white of an egg, and shiving bones of fish; but this is but a fancy, and the workmen of Fokien, who work just as those of Quamsi, don't do otherwise. After all these preparations, they put the vases in a furnace, wherein they kindle a gentle and constant uniform fire, that bakes them without breaking; and, for fear lest the exterior air should do them damage, they do not draw them out till a long while after, when they have acquired their due consistence, and have been gradually cooled.

This is all, madam, I have to say to the mystery of porcelain, that they have so long sought after in Europe. Providence, and the prosperity of religion, that obliged me to run over the greatest part of China, did not carry me into the province of Quamsi, where the earth is found whereof they make it; so that I do not sufficiently know it, as to my own particular, so far as to be able to describe the nature and particular qualities thereof; perhaps it is not much different from some soft stones that are found in several provinces of France. And if so be the ingenious would please to make some experiments, and operate diligently, by making use of several sorts of waters, after the above-mentioned manner, it might not be impossible to succeed.

Besides these varnish'd cabinets and vessels of porcelain, the Chinese adorn likewise their apartments with pictures: they do not excel in this art, because they are not curious in perspective, notwithstanding they diligently apply themselves to painting; they take delight in it; and there are a great company of painters among them: some paint the ceiling, representing, upon the chamber-walls, an order of architecture without symmetry, by bands or fillets continued all along around at the top and bottom of the wall, and above the capital of the column, which contains only single columns, placed at an equal distance,

distance, without any other ornament of architecture. Others only whiten the chamber, or glaze paper upon it. They hang the pictures of their ancestors up and down, with some maps and pieces of white satin, on which are painted flowers, fowls, mountains and palaces; upon some others they write in capital letters sentences of morality, that explain the maxims and rules of perfect government. Some chairs, varnish'd tables, some cabinets, flower-pots, and lanterns of silk, well ordered, and placed in due proportion, make a pretty handsome apartment.

Altho' you do not enter the bed-chamber, yet are their beds very fine; in summer they have taffaty curtains powdered with flowers, trees, and birds, in gold and silk embroidery. The sort of work that comes from the province of Nankim is in request, and this is the most noble and fine of all the Chinese furniture. Others have curtains of the finest gaze, which is no security against the weather, but close enough to defend them against flies and gnats, that are intolerable in the night. In winter they make use of coarse satin stitched with dragons and other figures, according as their fancy guides them: the counterpane is in a manner the same. They do not use feather-beds, but their cotton quilts are very thick; their bedstead ordinarily is of joiners work, beautified with figures. I have seen some very fine and exquisite.

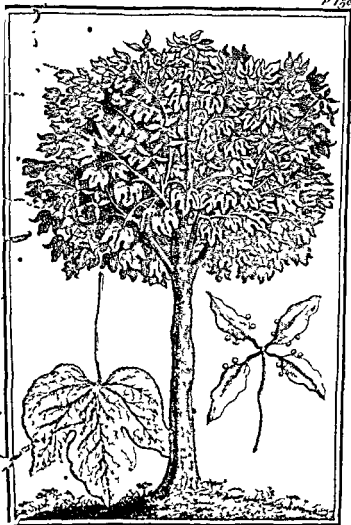
By all that I have said, you may judge, madam, that these people have shut themselves up within the bounds of necessity and profit, without being over-solicitous about magnificence; their houses are neat and decent, but not fine: they seem still more negligent as to their gardens; they have in that respect conceptions much different from ours; for except places designed for the sepulchre of their ancestors, which they leave untill'd, they would think themselves out of their wits to put the ground to



no other use than to make alleys and walks, to cultivate flowers, and plant groves of unprofitable trees. The benefit of the commonwealth commands that all should be sowed; and their own particular interest, that more nearly concerns them than the publick good, doth not permit them to prefer pleasure to profit.

'Tis true, the flowers of the country do not deserve their looking after, they have none curious; and tho' many may be met with like those in Europe, yet they cultivate them so ill, that one is much ado to know them. Nevertheless there are trees in some places that would afford great ornament in their gardens, if they knew how to order them. Instead of fruit, they are almost all the year long laden with flowers of a florid carnation; the leaves are small, like those of the elm, the trunk irregular, the branches crooked, and bark smooth. If alleys were made of them, mixing therewith (which might easily be done) some orange trees, it would be the most pleasant thing in the world; but, seeing the Chinese walk not much, alleys do not agree with them.

Amongst other trees they might dispose of in gardens, there is one they call the Qutom chu, resembling the sycomore, the leaves are round, the diameter between eight or nine inches, fastened to a stalk a foot long, it is extremely tufted, and laden with clusters of flowers, so thick set, that the sun cannot pierce it with his rays: the fruit, which is extraordinary small, notwithstanding the tree is very large, is produced after this manner: Towards August, or the end of July, there spring out of the very point of the branches, little bunches of leaves different from the other; they are whiter, softer, and as broad, and are in lieu of flowers, upon the border of each of these leaves grow three or four small grains or kernels, as big as green pease, that inclose a white substance,



*Outom-Chu . 1 Tree in China.*

substance, very pleasant to the taste, like to that of an hazie Nut that is not yet ripe. This tree being fruitful, and the manner of bearing its fruit being something extraordinary, I was apt to believe, madam, you might be desirous to see the figure of it, which I have caused to be engraven.

-The Chinese, who so little apply themselves to order their gardens, and give them real ornaments, do yet delight in them, and are at some cost about them; they make grotto's in them, raise little pretty artificial eminences, transport thither by pieces whole rocks, which they heap one upon another, without any further design than to imitate nature. If they could, besides all this, have the convenience of so much water as is necessary to water their cabbage and leguminous plants, they would desire no more. The emperor hath fountains, after the European manner; but private persons content themselves with their ponds and wells.

But altho' the Chinese neglect the ornaments of their houses, yet no people affect more to appear magnificent in publick. The government, that condemns, or rather does not allow, but regulates expences as to other matters, does not only approve of this, but contributes to it on these occasions, for reasons that I shall tell you in the sequel of the history.

When persons of quality receive visits, or make any; when they go along the streets, or when upon their journey, but especially at such time when they appear before the emperor, or make their address to the viceroys, they are always accompanied with a train and air of grandeur that fills one with astonishment.

The Mandarines, richly habited, are carried in a sedan gilded, and open, borne upon the shoulders of eight, or sixteen persons, accompanied with all the officers of their tribunal, who surround them with umbrello's and other marks of their dignity. Some walk

walk before them two and two, bearing chairs, faces, escutcheons of varnish'd wood, upon which may be read, in large gold characters, all the titles of honour annex'd to their places of trust, together with a brazen bason, upon which they beat a certain number of strokes, according to the rank they bear in the province; they continually speak aloud, and threaten the people to make way. Other officers follow in the same order, and sometimes four or five gentlemen on horseback bring up the rear. Some Mandarines never appear in publick without a train of three or fourscore domesticks.

Those that belong to the army go commonly on horseback, and, if of any considerable rank, they are evermore at the head of twenty-five or thirty cavaliers. The princes of the blood at Pekin are preceded by four of their officers, and follow themselves in the midst of a squadron that marches without order. But then they wear no liveries in China, but the domesticks are habited according to the quality of their masters in black sattin, or painted linnen. Altho the horses be neither fine nor well managed, yet are the trappings and harness very magnificent; the bits, saddle, and stirrups are gilded, or else of silver. Instead of leather, they make bridles of two or three twists of coarse pink'd sattin, two fingers broad. Under the horse's neck, at the beginning of the breast-plate, hang two great tassels of that curious red horse-hair wherewith they cover their bonnets, which are fastened to two huge buttons of brass gilded or wash'd with silver, hung at rings of the same metal; this shews fine in a cavalcade, but upon a long journey, especially upon a course, it is cumbersome.

Not only the princes and persons of the highest rank appear in publick with a train, but even these of a meaner quality go always on horseback along the streets, or in a close sedan, followed by several foot-  
men

men, the Tartarian ladies do often make use of calashes with two wheels, but they have not the use of the coach

The magnificence of the Chinese Mandarines principally displays itself in the journeys they take by water, the prodigious bigness of their barges, that are little inferior to ships, the finery, carving, painting and gilding of the apartments, the great number of officers and seamen that serve aboard, the different badges of their dignity every where displayed, their arms, flags, streamers, and the like, do abundantly distinguish them from the Europeans, who are never worse accoutred, or more careless than when they travel

Besides, the Chinese have their solemn feasts, which they celebrate with great pomp and charges, the first three days in the year are spent in rejoicing throughout the whole empire, they array themselves magnificently, they visit one another, they send presents to all their friends, and to all the persons whom it in any way concerns them to observe Gaming, feasting, and comedies take up every body's time Ten or twelve days before abundance of little robberies are committed, because those, who are destitute of money, seek how to come by it, and are resolved to have some whoever goes without, to supply them in these diversions

The 15th day of the first month is still more solemn, they call it the Day or Feast of Lanthorns, because they hang them up in all the houses, and in all the streets, in such a great number, that it is a madness rather than a festival they light up, it may be, that day two hundred millions You will see, Madam, by what I am going to relate, that they have run into extremes in this ceremony which otherwise might have been tolerated, as several other customs are, to comply with that people's humour,

but which now are become the most serious delight of persons of quality.

They expose to view that day lanthorns of all prices; some of them cost two thousand crowns; and some of the nobility retrench every year something from their table, apparel or equipage, to appear magnificent in lanthorns. It is not the materials that are dear, the gilding, sculpture, the painting, silk and varnish make all the show. As for the bigness it is immense. There are some of them to be seen of upward of twenty seven feet diameter: these are halls, or chambers, and three or four of these machines would make pretty handsome apartments; insomuch that you will admire, madam, when I tell you that in China we may eat, lie, receive visits, represent comedies, and dance balls in a lanthorn.

A publick bonfire is little enough to enlighten it; but because it would be inconvenient, they are satisfied with an infinite number of wax-candles or lamps, which at a distance shew very pretty. There are also represented divers shows to gratify the vulgar; and there are persons concealed, who, by the help of several little machines, make puppets to play of the bigness of men and women, the actions of which are so natural, that even those, who are acquainted with the trick, are apt to be mistaken: for my part, madam, I was not deceived, because I was never present at these spectacles. What I relate is upon the report of the Chinese, and upon the credit of some relations whose authors are well known, and whom I should be loth to condemn.

Besides these prodigious lanthorns, there are an infinite number of a middle size, of which I can more safely speak; I have seen of them not only neat, but magnificent; they are commonly composed of six faces, or pains, each of which makes a frame four feet high, a foot and an half broad, of varnish'd wood, and adorned with some painting.

ings They hang it on the inside with a web of fine transparent silk, whereon are painted flowers, trees, rocks, and sometimes human figures The painting is very curious, the colours lively, and when the wax-candles are lighted, the light disperseth a splendor that renders the work altogether agreeable

These six pannels join'd together compose an hexagon, closed at the top by six carved figures, that make the crown of it There are hung round about broad strings of satin of all colours, like ribbons, together with divers other silken ornaments that fall upon the angles, without hiding any thing of the light, or pictures We sometimes use them for an ornament to our churches The Chinese hang them in windows, in their halls, and sometimes in public places

. The feast of lanterns is also celebrated by bonfires that are kindled at that time in all quarters of the city, and by fireworks, for there is no body but lets off squibs and crackers Some have spoken of these as the finest fireworks in the world We are told that there appear figures of whole trees covered with leaves and fruit, you may there distinguish the cherries, raisins, apples and oranges, not only by their figures, but also by their particular colour, every thing is painted to the life, insomuch that one would really imagine that they are naturally trees that are enlightened in the night, and not an artificial fire, on which they have bestowed the figure and appearance of trees

These descriptions, in some relations of China, excite in those, who travel thither, a real passion to behold all these miracles, I should have been very glad, as others are, to have upon my own personal knowledge been able to have related them I have often sought for an occasion, but all in vain These fires are not so ordinary as people imagine, and to retrieve them it will perhaps be necessary to

go back to their time who writ of them. The father missionaries that sojourn at Pekin, who have been eye-witnesses of what was performed on this account in the emperor's palace, have often told me, that it was not at all as they imagined it to be, and at the bottom, that there was nothing very extraordinary in it.

Nevertheless, madam, it is not just wholly to condemn these authors, as persons of no credit; they are good honest missionaries, who would not impose upon us at pleasure, and what I have seen in India, and especially upon the coast of Coromandel, may justify them in some respect; they do there really represent all sorts of figures, not by artificial works that burst in the air like our squibs (for to me it seems not possible to reduce flame to such determined figures as would be necessary to distinguish raisins and leaves, and much less to imitate every respective colour that is natural to fruits) but by means of a combustible matter compounded of sulphur, camphire, and some other ingredients, wherewith they dawb pieces of wood in form of a cross, of trees, and flowers, or in any other form they please.

As soon as they have given fire to it, that expanded gum is set on fire on all sides like coal, and represents, till it be totally consumed, the figure of the wood on which it was applied; so that it is no great wonder that they should make trees and fruits of fire; and I do imagine those, they so much magnify in China, may be some such thing.

Not but that these sorts of fires have their beauty; for, besides their particular colour, the prettiest, most splendid, and withal the most pleasant to the eye imaginable, it is no mean ornament in a publick illumination, to be able to represent men and horses of fire, palaces all on fire, with their order of architecture, cartouches, and armories of light,



a great company of other representations, that might be made in Europe with a great deal more exactness than in the East, where the artificers neither have ingenuity to contrive great designs, nor dexterity enough perfectly to execute them

Perhaps, madam, you will have the curiosity to learn what might have given occasion to the Chinese to ordain such an extravagant festival as this, whereof I have the honour to speak to your grace. As it is very ancient, so the original seems very obscure. The vulgar ascribe it to an accident that happened in the family of a famous Mandarin, whose daughter, walking one evening upon the banks of a river, fell in, and was drowned; the afflicted father, with his family, run thither, and the better to find her, he caused a great company of lanthorns to be lighted. All the inhabitants of the place thronged after him with torches, they searched for her all night to no purpose, and the Mandarin's only comfort was to see the willingness and readiness of the people, every one of which seem'd, as if he had lost his own sister, because they look'd upon him as their father.

The year ensuing they made fires upon the shore on the same day, they continued the ceremony every year, every one lighted his lanthorn, and by degrees it commenc'd into a custom. The Chinese are pretty superstitious in this respect, but there is no probability that such a small loss should have such a mighty influence upon a whole empire.

Some Chinese doctors pretend that this festival deduceth its original from a story which they report in the manner following. Three thousand five hundred and eighty three years ago, China was governed by a prince named Ki, the last emperor of the first race, whom Heaven was pleased to endue with qualities capable of constituting an hero, if love to women, and the spirit of debauchery, that took possession of

his heart, had not reduced him to a monster in the empire, and an object of abhorrence in nature.

He had rare parts, a winning, pleasing way with him, great courage, and was of such extraordinary strength of body, that he broke iron with his hand. But this Sampson had his mistresses, and grew weak; amongst other extravagancies, they relate, that he exhausted all his treasures in building a tower of precious stones to honour the memory of a concubine; and that he filled a pool with wine, for him and three thousand young men to bathe in, after a lascivious manner. These excesses, and many other abominations, prevailed with the wisest of his court to offer him some advice, according to the custom, but he put them to death; yea, and he imprisoned one of the kings of the empire, who endeavoured to divert him from these disorders: at length he committed a fact that consummated the destruction of himself and all his family.

One day, in the heat of his debaucheries and jollity, complaining that life was too short, *I should be content*, says he to the queen whom he doated on, *if I could make you eternally happy; but in a few years, nay in a few days peradventure death will, in spite of us, put an end to our pleasures; and all my power will not suffice to give you a life longer than that which the lowest of my subjects hope to have; this thought continually troubles my spirit, and disperses over my heart a bitterness that binds me from relishing the sweetness of life: why cannot I make you reign for ever? and seeing there are stars that never cease shining, must you needs be subject to death? you that shine more bright upon earth, than all the stars do in heaven*

*'Tis true, my lord, saith this foolish princess, that you cannot make your life eternal, but it depends on you to forget the brevity of it, and to live as tho' you should never die: what need have we of the sun and moon to*

*rejoice,*

measure the duration of our life? The morning star that rises every morning, and the night that comes every evening, do continually put us in mind of the beginning and end of our days, as those begin and end, so do ours, that are begun, advance with precipitation and will speedily be at an end

Come, come, sir, let us no longer cast our eyes upon these globes that roll over our heads have you a mind once for all to cure your imagination? build yourself a new heaven, ever enlightened, always serene, always favourable to your desires, where we shall perceive not the least footstep of the instability of human things You may easily do it, by erecting a great and magnificent palace, shut up on all sides from the light of the sun, you may hang up all around magnificent lanterns, whose constant splendor will be preferable to that of the sun

Cause to be transported thither whatsoever is capable of contributing to your pleasure, and, for fear of being one moment distracted by them, break off all correspondence with other creatures We will both of us enter into this new world that you shall create I will be to you in lieu of all things, you alone will there yield me more pleasure than all the old world can offer; yea, nature itself, that will be renewed for our sakes, will render us more happy than the gods are in heaven 'Tis there that we will forget the vicissitude of days and nights, time shall be no more in respect of us, no more incumbrance, no more shadow, no more clouds, nor change in life; and provided, my lord, that you on your part will be always constant, always passionate, my felicity will seem to me unalterable, and your happiness will be eternal

The emperor, whether it was that he thought he could deceive himself, or whether he had a mind to please the queen, I cannot tell, but he caused this enchanted castle to be built, and there immured her and himself. There he pass'd several months

immersed in delights, and wholly taken up with his new life; but the people, not being able to endure such excess, obliged one of the wisest kings of the empire to declare against him.

So soon as the emperor had notice of the conspiracy, he appeared presently in the old world, which, whether he would or no, stuck more to his heart than the new: he appears at the head of an army to punish this rebel; but seeing himself abandoned by the people, whom he had so foolishly deserted, he thought it his wisest course to abdicate, and betake himself to flight. During the three remaining years of his life, he wandered from province to province incognito in a poor condition, always in danger of being discovered, as if God, by this disquiet and continual agitation, had a mind to punish him for that soft and effeminate repose, wherein he thought to have found constant delights and eternal felicity. In the mean time they destroyed his palaces, and to preserve the memory of such an unworthy action to posterity, they hung up lanthorns in every quarter of the city. This custom became anniversary, and since that time a considerable festival in the whole empire; it is solemnized at Hamcheu, with more magnificence than any where else: and the report goes that the illuminations there are so splendid, that an emperor once, not daring openly to leave his court to go thither, committed himself, with the queen, and several princesses of his family, into the hands of a magician, who promised him to transport them thither in a trice. He made them in the night to ascend magnificent thrones that were borne up by swans, which in a moment arrived at Hamcheu.

The emperor saw at his leisure all the solemnity, being carried upon a cloud, that hovered over the city, and descended by degrees; and came back again with the same speed and equipage, no body at court.

court perceiving his absence. This is not the first fable, the Chinese have told; they have stories upon every thing, for they are superstitious to excess. And in point of magick, be it feigned or true, there is no people in the world that have come near them.

However that be, certain it is, that they take huge delight in publick illuminations; and one of their kings, who for his good qualities was become the darling of the people, once thought he could not better demonstrate to them his reciprocal affection, than by inventing for their sakes such like feasts. So that once a year, for eight nights one after another, he opened his palace, which they took care to illuminate by abundance of lanthorns and fireworks. He appeared in person without any guards, and mixed in the middle of the croud, not suffering them to distinguish him from others, to the end that every one might enjoy the liberty of speaking, playing, and hearing divers concerts of musick there performed.

This action hath rendered this prince renowned in the Chinese history; but what would they have said if they had chanced to be in the apartment of Versailles, where the best and most potent of kings so often assembles all the innocent pleasures that christianity allows, to make his court, if possible, as happy as himself; if they did but behold those illuminations, those concerts, those sports, those magnificent banquets, and the prince himself striving to mix with the multitude; nay, and would be unknown, were he not distinguished by an air of grandeur independent on his dignity, whereof he cannot divest himself.

Since I am speaking, madam, of the magnificence of the Chinese, I cannot, without being wanting in a material point, pass over in silence what relates to their emperors, who never appear in publick, but as so many deities, environed with all the splendor that may attract the respect and veneration of

of the people. Heretofore they rarely shewed themselves; but the Tartars, who reign at present, are much more popular, and the late king did not stand so much upon nice punctilio's. The present emperor in that, as well as in all things else, observes a medium, which contents his own nation, without totally displeasing the Chinese. Nevertheless, as moderate as he is, in comparison of the ancients, one may boldly say, he never marches but at the head, or in the midst of an army.

At such time he is accompanied with all the lords of the court: there is nothing but silks, gildings, and precious stones, every thing there is splendid and pompous; the arms, the horses' harness, the umbrello's, the streamers, and a thousand other badges of royal dignity, or of the particular quality of every prince, every where sparkle at that time. In a word, there is nothing more regular on these occurrences, than this crowd; every one knows his respective rank; and the head of that man, or at least his fortune, lies at stake, who shall presume indiscreetly to discompose the order of the march.

When he takes a progress to visit the provinces of the empire, he goes commonly post, followed by a few guards and some trusty officers; but in all the cities upon the road, and in all the difficult passages, there are so many troops drawn up into battalia, that he seems to ride post cross an army.

He goes sometimes into Tartary to take the diversion of hunting, but yet always accompanied as if he went to the conquest of some new empire. He carries along with him no less than forty thousand men, who endure a great deal of hardship, whether the weather be hot or cold, because they encamp in a very inconvenient manner; nay, and it sometimes happens, that, in one of these toilsome huntings, there die more horses than he would lose in

in a pitch'd battle; but he counts the destruction of ten thousand horses as nothing.

The fathers that accompany him thither say, that never does his magnificence more display itself than upon this occasion; there he sees sometimes thirty or forty petty Tartar kings, that come to address him, or pay him tribute; yea, there be some of them that bear the name of Ham or Cham, that is to say, emperor; they are all of them just as the Mandarines of the first order, his pensioners; he gives them his daughters in marriage; and, to make them the more sure to his interest, he declares himself their protector against all the western Tartars, who often annoy them; nay, and have sometimes forces enough to attack China itself with some chance of good success.

Whilst the croud of these petty sovereigns appears in the emperor's camp, the court is wonderful sumptuous, and to the end he may possess these Barbarians with some idea of the power of China, the train, habits, and tents of the Mandarines are rich and glorious even to excess. This is what the missionaries, who have been witnesses of the same, do report; and I suppose we may give credit to their relations not only because they all unanimously agree in this matter, but also because what they say does altogether comport with the genius of the Chinese.

That, which the relation of father Magalhen's, newly translated with learned and useful notes, says, concerning the pompous march of the emperor, when he goes to the temple to offer sacrifices to Heaven, hath something odd in it, and deserves here to be repeated, and so much the more, because these things are neither false nor magnified; for the orders observed in publick ceremonies are known to every body to be so regular, that the very emperor dares not add or diminish the least article,

This

This pompous ceremony begins with twenty four trumpets, adorned with golden coronets; with 24 drums ranked, each of them in two files; 24 men armed with truncheons varnish'd and gilt, 6 or 8 feet long, follow them in the same order and rank; after that follow 100 soldiers bearing noble halberds, armed with a semicircle of iron, in form of a crescent, followed with 100 serjeants at mace, and two officers whose pikes are painted with red varnish in different places, with flowers and golden figures.

Next after this first file are borne 400 curiously wrought lanthorns, 400 flambeaux of a gilded wood that flame like our torches, 200 lances charged with huge tufts of silk, 24 banners, whereon are painted the signs of the zodiack, and 56 others that represent the celestial constellations: there are to be seen moreover 200 fans with figures of dragons, and other animals; 24 umbrello's still more magnificent, and a livery cupboard borne by the officers of the palace, whose utensils are of gold.

All this does immediately precede the emperor, who at last appears on horseback, gloriously attired, surrounded with six white led horses, whose harness is covered with gold and precious stones with 100 life-guards and pages of honour; they bear up before him an umbrello that shades him and the horse, and dazzles the sight with all the ornaments that man could possibly invent to enrich it.

The emperor is followed by all the princes of the blood, by the Mandarines of the first order, by the viceroys and principal lords of the court, all in their formalities: immediately after come 500 young gentlemen of quality, which may be called the band of gentlemen pensioners, attended by 1000 footmen, array'd in carnation silk, bordered with flowers, stitched with little stars in gold and silver. This is properly the king's household.

This



This retinue is still more extraordinary by what follows, than by what went before for immediately 36 men bear an open sedan that resembles a triumphal chair, 120 bearers support another close one, so big, that one would take it for an entire apartment. Afterwards there appear four chariots, the two first of which are drawn by elephants, and the other two by horses. Each sedan and chariot hath a company of 50 men for its guard the charioteers are richly apparelled, and the elephants, as well as the horses, are covered with embroidered housings.

Then 2000 Mandarin officers, and 2000 officers of the army, all most richly cloathed, marching in order, and according to their custom, with a gravity that commands respect, bring up the rear of this stately show. It is not needful that the court should be at great charges for this pomp, and as soon as ever the emperor is pleased to go offer sacrifice, they always are in a readiness to attend him in this order. I do not know that, in our entertainments and solemn festivals, we have any thing more splendid and magnificent.

But the emperor of China never appears greater than when he gives audience to foreign ambassadors, that prodigious number of troops who are at that time in arms, that incredible number of Mandarines in their formalities, distinguished according to their rank and quality, placed in order, without confusion, without noise, without disturbance, in such order as they would appear in the temples of their gods; the ministers of state, the lord chief justices of all the sovereign courts, the petty kings, the princes of the blood, the heirs of the crown, more humble before this prince, than they are exalted above the people the emperor himself seated on a throne, who beholds prostrate at his feet all this crowd of adorers, all this, I say, bears an air of sovereignty and grandeur in it, that is to be found

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no where but in China, which christian humi<sup>l</sup>ity does not so much as permit kings to desire in the most glorious courts of Europe.

I should never make an end, if I had a mind to descend to all the particulars of the publick ceremonies, where the Chinese display all their magnificence; I suppose, madam, I have spoken enough to give you a just idea of it; now if you please to permit me, in the close of this letter, to add what I think of it myself, in reference to France, where the riches and ambition of private persons have carried stateliness to a higher pitch, than in any other realm in Europe; it seems to me that the Chinese do almost ever surpass us in common and publick actions, by a more glorious and specious outside; but that in domestick things, our apartments are incomparably richer, the retinue of persons of quality more decently cloathed, tho' not so numerous, the equipages more commodious, the tables better served, and generally speaking, the expence more constant, and better regulated. I am with a most profound respect,

*Madam,*

*Your most humble,*

*and most obedient Servant,*

L. J.

LETTRE VII.

*To the Archbishop of Rheims, first Peer of France.*

*Of the Language, Characters, Books, and Morality  
of the Chinese.*

*My Lord,*

AFTER having had the honour to entertain your grace at your spare hours, concerning the

the different customs of the empire of China, I believed you would not take it amiss to see from me an account of what relates to their language, characters, books, and morals

There are certain points of history that one cannot enter upon without much caution, and especially when one is to explain them to such a person as yourself, whose particular character it is, to know exactly and most perfectly whatever you study, to satisfy such a mind, there is requisite an exactness and method, which the freedom and looseness of discourse will not admit of

I well know, my lord, that it is difficult to add, upon this subject, any new knowledge to that which hath rendered you one of the most knowing prelates of the age, how good and diffusive soever the morality of China may be, yet are they but the faint glimpses of narrow and imperfect reason, which disappear as soon as they are brought near those divine lights that religion discovers to us, and whereinto you have so long dived by the continual reading of fathers, canons, and councils

Nevertheless, altho' all the philosophy of that renowned nation be not able to instruct us, yet is it worth our inquiry to know, to what pitch of perfection it heretofore brought sciences, and that too at a time when other people in the world were either ignorant or barbarous Their chief learning lies in their writing and their language, wherefore I will first speak of that what I have observed most remarkable therein is this

The Chinese language hath no analogy with any of those that are in vogue in the world, no affinity neither in the sound, in the pronunciation of the words, nor yet in the disposing and ranging of the conceptions Every thing is mysterious therein, and you will, no question, stand amazed, my lord, to understand that all the words of it may be learnt in

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two hours, altho' there is required several years study to speak it that one may be feady to read all the books, and to understand them perfectly, without apprehending any thing, if another read it, that a doctor may compose a book with all the elaborateness possible, and this very same doctor may not know enough of it to explain himself in ordinary conversation, that a mute, instructed in the characters, might with his fingers, without writing, speak as fast as his auditors can conveniently hear him, in a word, that the self same words do often signify quite different things, and of two persons that shall pronounce them, it will be a compliment in the mouth of the one, and foul language in the mouth of the other These paradoxes, how surprising soever they may seem, are very true, notwithstanding, and your grace will grant it, if you please to give yourself never so little trouble, to cast your eyes upon what I shall write to you about it

This tongue contains no more than three hundred and thirty words, or thereabouts, all of one syllable, or at least they seem to be so, because they pronounce them so succinctly, that a man can scarce distinguish the syllables although it be a tedious thing to read the whole series of them, yet shall I describe them in this place, as well to let you understand the tone, as to give you the satisfaction to see, at one view, comprised in one single page, a language so ancient, so famous, and I may say, so eloquent as this is

These few words would not be sufficient to express a man's self aptly upon all subjects, to supply words for arts and sciences, to maintain eloquence in discourse, or in writing, which is very different among the Chinese, if they had not an art to multiply the sense, without multiplying the words This art chiefly consists in the accents they give them, the same word pronounced with a stronger or weaker inflexion

| ca     | cai     | cam    | can    | che    |
|--------|---------|--------|--------|--------|
| chin   | cheou   | chī    | chiao  | choum  |
| fa     | fam     | fan    | fiou   | him    |
| han    | hao     | he     | hem    | hieou  |
| him    | hin     | hio    | hiu    | hee    |
| hoei   | hoen    | hou    | houm   | im     |
| in     | io      | iu     | jue    | hiao   |
| kie    | kien    | kicou  | kim    | lam    |
| lan    | lao     | le     | leam   | lin    |
| lio    | liu     | lo     | lou    | mao    |
| mau    | me      | mem    | men    | mouen  |
| mou    | moum    | mouon  | na     | nguen  |
| ngeou  | ngo     | ni     | niam   | nou    |
| nou    | noum    | nouon  | nun    | piao   |
| pe     | pien    | pim    | pin    | quouam |
| quouei | quouen  | quouo  | quouon | fi     |
| fiam   | fio     | fie    | fien   | fou    |
| fiu    | foui    | fu     | foum   | teou   |
| ti     | tiao    | tie    | tien   | tiai   |
| tiam   | tian    | tiao   | tfe    | tfin   |
| tio    | tia     | tfue   | tfuen  | tcha   |
| tchai  | tcham   | ti can | tchao  | tchu   |
| tchoua | tchouen | tchoue | tchoun | vo     |
| von    | vou     | voum   | 328    |        |
|        |         | oum    |        |        |

on of the voice hath divers significations, so that the Chinese language, when it is spoken exactly, is a kind of musick, and contains a real harmony, which composes the essence and particular character of it

There are five tones that are applied to each word, according to the sense one means to give it. The first is an uniform pronunciation without lightening or falling the voice, as if one should continue for some time the first note of our musick, the second raiseth the voice notably higher, the third is very acute, in the fourth you descend all on a sudden to a grave tone, in the fifth you pass to a more deep note, if I may presume so to express myself, by hollowing and framing a kind of base. It is very hard to explain my meaning herein any other way than by the language itself

However, you already see, my lord, that, by this diversity of pronunciation, 333 words are made 1665, besides, one may pronounce smoothly, or asperate each word, which is very usual, and does still increase the language by half. Sometimes these monosyllables are joined together, as we put our letters together, thereby to compose different words. Nay, they do more than all that, for sometimes a whole phrase, according as it follows or goes before another, hath a quite different sense, so it plainly appears, that this tongue, so poor, so seemingly barren, yet for all that, is indeed very rich and copious in furnishing us with variety of words

But these riches cost foreigners dear to come by them, and I cannot tell whether some missionaries had not better have laboured in the mines than to have applied themselves for several years to this labour, one of the hardest and most discouraging that one can experience in matter of study. I cannot apprehend how any one can have other thoughts, and I must confess I admir'd to read the new relation of father Magalhen, that the Chinese language

is easier than the Greek, Latin, and all the languages in Europe. He adds, one cannot doubt of it, if it be considered, that the difficulty in tongues proceeds from the memory ; now, one hath no trouble at all in this, that hath but very few words in comparison of others, nay, and may be learn'd in a day's time.

To argue as this father does, musick must cost us but an hour's time, seven words and seven tones do not much burthen the memory, and, if one have but a voice never so little flexible, one would think it were no hard matter to learn them ; nevertheless, we see by daily experience, whoso begins at thirty or forty years, unless he have a more than ordinary inclination for musick, scarce ever learns it to purpose ; nay, and after much application and long exercise, is still, to his dying day, but a pitiful musician. How will it fare with a person who hath six tones to combine with above 300 words, that he does not know by the writing, which he must call to mind extempore, when he would speak fluently, or when he is to distinguish in another person that precipitates his words, and who scarce observes the accent and particular tone of each word ?

It is not the memory that is put to a stress upon this occasion, but the imagination and ear, which in some certain persons never distinguish one tone from another ; the turn of the tongue also conduces infinitely thereto ; and there are certain persons that have memory sufficient to learn a book in a few days, who will tug at it for a month together to pronounce only one word, and all to no purpose : How happens it, that, let him take what care he will, a man has never a good accent in our language, when he is born in certain provinces, if he lives in them till he is grown up.

Nevertheless, to make yourself understood in Chinese, you must give each word its peculiar accent ;

cent; vary but never so little, and you fall into another tone that makes a ridiculous counter-sense; thus, if you have not a care, you may call a man *Beast*, when you mean to call him *Sir*, because the word, that is common to them both, hath a different sense, only by the different tone they give it. so that it is properly in this language, that one may say, the tone is all in all.

This is that also that makes the Chinese tongue more difficult than others. When a stranger that hath but a smattering intends to speak French, if he pronounces some words but never so little well, we easily guess at those he speaks ill, and we know his meaning, but in China, one single word, badly pronounced, is enough to render the whole phrase unintelligible; and one phrase at the beginning, that is not well heard, and understood, hinders the understanding of what follows. So when one chances to come into a congregation, where they have already begun to speak about some business, one stares about a good while without understanding, till such time as by degrees they put him in the way, and till he gets hold of the thread of the discourse.

Besides what I have been saying, this tongue hath particular characters that distinguish it from all others. First of all, they do not speak as they write, and the most quaint discourse is barbarous, harsh, and unpleasant when printed. If you would write well, you must use more proper terms, more noble expressions, more particular turns, than do occur in common discourse, and which are proper only for writing, the style of which is more different from the common elocution, than our obscurest Latin poets are from the smoothest and most natural prose.

Secondly, eloquence does not consist in a certain disposition of periods, such as orators affect, who, to impose upon the ears, stuff it sometimes only with words, because they have but few things to tell them.



them. The Chinese are eloquent by their lively expressions, noble metaphors, bold and succinct comparisons, and above all, by abundance of sentences and passages taken from the ancients, which amongst them are of great moment: They deliver a great many things in a few words, their stile is close and mysterious, obscure and not continued, they seldom make use of those particles that illustrate and connect our discourse. They seem sometimes to speak not to be understood, oftentimes they expect you should understand several things, altho' they do not mention them; so much sense and thought do they inclose in few words!

It is true, this obscurity almost quite vanishes in respect of those who have a perfect knowledge in the characters; and a learned man, that reads a work, is seldom mistaken in it, but in speaking, one is often at a stand: and I have convers'd with some doctors, who, to understand one another in familiar discourses, were obliged to describe with their finger in the air the particular letter that express'd their words, whose sense could not be determined by the pronunciation.

Thirdly, the sound of words is pretty pleasing to the ear, especially in the province of Nankim, where the accent is more correct than in any other part; for there, many pronounce the different tones so fine and delicately, that a stranger hath much ado to perceive it. Besides, they never use R, which contributes not a little to mollify that language; yet must it be allowed, that most part of the Chinese that pretend to speak correctly, speak very unmusically, they draw out their words intolerably; and tho' they be all monosyllables, yet by meer extending them, they make words infinite and like to intire phrases.

They have moreover a termination which often occurs, which we express commonly by a double ll; the

the sound comes from the bottom of the *aspera arteria*, so uncouth and unnatural, that that alone is capable of spoiling a language : but as certain forced aspirations in the Castilian tongue do notwithstanding please the Spaniards, so the Chinese are persuaded that these same gutturals that displease us are a real grace ; and that these more masculine and stronger tones give a body to their language, without which it would be apt to degenerate into an effeminate softness, which would at best have no grace but in the mouths of women and children.

Fourthly, they want abundance of sounds which we express by our letters ; for example, they do not pronounce *A, b, d, o, r, x, z*, after the same manner as we do in France ; and when any one forces them to pronounce them, they always make some alteration, and use sounds that in their language come the nearest to them, never being able almost to express them exactly ; which proved formerly a great difficulty for the Chinese priests in consecrating the host, who could not say mass in Latin without falling into a ridiculous jargon. Yet there was so much pains taken to frame their tongue, that at length they have succeeded to admiration ; so that the Latin in their mouths is not much more different from that of the Portuguese, than that of the Portuguese is from ours.

All that I have been saying, my lord, is to be understood of the Mandarin language, that is current all over the empire, which is universally understood every where ; for the common people at Fokien, besides that, speak a particular tongue, that hath no affinity with the same, who look upon it in China, as we do upon the Biscay language, or Basbetron in France.

What relates to the China character is no less singular than their tongue ; they have not any alphabet as we have, that contains the elements, and, as it were, the principles of the words ; nay, they cannot

so much as comprehend how we are able, with so small a number of figures, each of which signifies nothing, to express upon a piece of paper all our conceptions, to compose such an infinite number of books, as to stock whole libraries. This art of putting letters together, to compose words of them, to combine them both into a prodigious number of senses, is to them a hidden mystery; and that, which is so common amongst other nations, never obtained amongst them; either thro' the little converse they have had with other neighbouring nations, or thro' the small account they made of foreign inventions.

Instead of characters, at the beginning of their monarchy, they us'd hieroglyphicks; they painted rather than wrote; and by the natural images of things, which they drew upon paper, they endeavour'd to express and convey their ideas to others; so that to write a bird, they painted its figure, and to signify a forest, they represented a great company of trees; a circle signified the sun, and a crescent the moon.

This sort of writing was not only imperfect, but very inconvenient; for besides that one express'd his thoughts but by halves, even those few, that were express'd, were never perfectly conceived, and it was, besides, utterly impossible to avoid mistakes: moreover, there needed whole volumes to express a few things, because the painting took up a great deal of room; insomuch, that the Chinese by little and little changed their writing, and composed more simple figures, tho' less natural: They likewise invented many to express some things that painting could not represent, as the voice, smell, senses, conceptions, passions, and a thousand other objects that have neither body nor figure; of several simple draughts they after made compound ones, and at this rate they multiplied their characters *ad infinitum*, because they destined one or more of them for each particular word.

This

This abundance of letters is, in my opinion, the source of the Chinese ignorance, because they employ all their days in this study, and have no leisure so much as to think of other sciences, fancying themselves learned enough if they can but read. However, they are far from understanding all their letters: it is very much, if, after several years in despicable study, they are able to understand fifteen or twenty thousand. The vulgar sort of the learned content themselves with less, and I cannot believe, that there was ever any doctor that understood the third part, for they reckon upwards of twenty four thousand.

As for strangers, it is scarce credible how much this study disgusts them, it is an heavy cross to be served all a man's life long (for commonly it is not too long for it) to stuff his head with this horrible multitude of figures, and to be always occupied in decyphering imperfect hieroglyphicks, that have in a manner no analogy with the things they signify, there is not the least charm in this, as in the sciences of Europe, which, in fatiguing, do not cease to recompence the weary mind with delight. It is necessary in China, that a man may not be discouraged, to seek out more sublime motives, to excite this tired inclination, to make a virtue of necessity, and to please one's self to think, that this study, how cribbed and ingrateful soever it seems, is not sterile, because it is a sure way to bring men to the knowledge of Jesus Christ.

It is that way whereby we make ourselves understood by the learned, whereby we insinuate ourselves into their spirits, and thereby prepare them for the great truths of the christian religion, there is not that person whom this hope of preaching the gospel successfully does not encourage and inspire. We can not also doubt, but that our blessed Lord may accompany the effects of our good will, with a par-

ticular blessing ; and it is more than probable, that, if it had not been for the assistance from above, the missionaries would never have been so great proficients, as to make such a progress that has astonished the ablest doctors of the empire.

Amongst these characters, there are some of divers sorts. The first are almost out of use, and they preserve them only out of veneration to antiquity. The second, not so ancient by far, take place only in publick inscriptions ; when there is occasion for them, they consult books, and, by the help of a dictionary, it is easy to decypher them. The third, much more regular and fair, serve for the impression, and also for the ordinary writing ; nevertheless, the strokes and draughts of them being very exact and curious, there needs a considerable time to write them. And for that reason, they have contrived a fourth kind of writing, the strokes whereof being more joined, and less distinguish'd one from another, facilitate the writing faster ; for that reason, they are called Voluble Letters : These three last characters do much resemble one another, and do answer to our capital letters, to the printed letters, and ordinary writing.

Instead of a pen, they use a pencil, held in the hand, not obliquely, as our painters, but directly, as if the paper were to be prick'd. The Chinese always write from top to bottom, and begin their first letter where ours end ; so that, to read their books, the last page must first be sought for, which with them is the beginning : Their paper being very thin and almost transparent, they are fain to double it, for fear lest the letters do run into one another when they write on the backside : but these doubled leaves are so even, that one can hardly perceive it.

To write a bad hand was never in China, as formerly in France, a sign of nobility ; every body is ambitious to write fair, and, before one stands can-

didate to be admitted to the first degree of learning, he must give a specimen of his fair hand. A letter ill cut in a composition, in a work, in a petition, is a considerable fault, and because one stroke often alters the whole sense, there needs no more to make one, upon examination, to lose the degree of doctor, and consequently to ruin his fortune. So that all the Mandarines write fair, and the emperor excels in that, as in all other things.

Printing, which is but an art in its infancy in Europe, hath been, from all antiquity, in use in China, however it is something different from ours, as we have but few letters, from which we can compose huge volumes, by putting them together, few characters suffice, because those that have served for the first leaf are still employed for all the others. The prodigious number of China characters hinder you from using this way, except only in some restrictions that concern the palace, and title pages, into which few letters can come in. On all other occasions they find it more easy to engrave their letters upon wooden boards, and the charge is much less.

This is the way they go to work. He, who intends to print a book, gets it fair written over by a master scribe, the engraver glews each leaf upon an even smooth table, and then the draughts with the graving tool are done so exactly, that the characters have a perfect resemblance with the original, so that the impression is good or bad, according as a good or bad scribe hath been employed, this skill of the engravers is so great, that one cannot distinguish that which is imprinted from what was written by the hand, when they have made use of the same paper and ink.

It must be confess'd that this sort of printing is somewhat inconvenient, inasmuch as the boards must be multiplied as much as the leaves, so that

an indifferent big chamber will not suffice to contain all the little tables, that served for the impression of a large volume; yet when the engraving is finish'd, one is not obliged at the same time to draw off all the copies, by running a venture of not selling above half, and ruin his estate by a needless charge. The Chinese print their leaves, according as they put them off; and the wooden plates, which they easily run over again, after they have drawn off two or three hundred copies, serve for many other different impressions. Besides that, they have no occasion for a corrector of the press; for, provided that the leaf be exactly written, it is very rare that the engraver makes any faults, which is none of the least advantages.

The paper of China seems so fine, that they imagin'd in France that it was of silk, or cotton; but cotton is not so proper for that purpose as people imagine; and the artificers have assured me, that the little threads of silk cannot be beat small enough to compose an uniform paste, such as is requisite for the leaves. All the China paper is made of the bark, or inward rhind of Bambou; it is a tree more even, thicker, straiter, and stronger than the elder; they throw away the first rhind, as too hard and thick; the undermost, as being whiter, softer, pounded with fair water, serves for the matter whereof they compose paper, which they take up with frames or moulds, as long and broad as they think fit, as we do here: there are leaves of ten and twelve feet long; and the paper of the leaves is as white, and much more even and smoother than ours.

Instead of glew they pass alom upon it, which does not only hinder it from sinking, but renders it also so shining, that it appears as wash'd over with silver, or impregnated with varnish: it is extremely smooth under the pen, but especially under the pencil, that requires an even ground: for if it be rugged  
and

and knotty, like our paper, the little threads separate, and the letters are never well terminated

Yet for all that the China paper is not lasting, it is subject to fret, any moisture or dust sticks to it, and, by reason of its being made of the bark of a tree, worms infallibly breed in it, if care be not taken to beat the books now and then, and expose them to the sun, so that they cannot preserve in China, as we do in Europe, ancient manuscripts, and they continually renew the libraries, which are therefore only ancient, because they consist of authentick copies of ancient originals

Since I have told your grace all things that concern the books and printings of China, I hope you will not take it amiss if I speak a word or two concerning the particular quality of their ink. It is most excellent, and they have hitherto vainly tried in France to imitate it, that of Nankim is most set by, and there be sticks made of it so very curious, and of such a sweet scent, that one would be tempted to keep some of them tho' they should be of no use at all

I say sticks of ink, for it is not a liquor like ours, it is solid, and resembles our mineral colours, tho' lighter by far, they make it into all figures, the more usual are four square, but not so broad as long, about half an inch thick. There are some of them gilded with figures of dragons, birds, and flowers, they contrive for that purpose pretty moulds of wood so curiously wrought, that one would have much ado to make any thing more compleat upon metal

When one has a mind to write, they have a little polish'd marble upon the table, made hollow at the end, proper to hold water; they infuse one end of the stick therein, which they rub gently upon the smooth part of the marble; and in a moment, according as they rub, there is produced a liquor, more  
or



or less black, wherein they dip the point of the pencil to write with. This ink is shining, extremely black, and altho' it sinks when the paper is so fine, yet does it never extend further than the pencil, so that the letters are exactly terminated, how gross soever the strokes be.

It hath moreover another quality, that makes it admirable good for designing, that is, it admits of all the diminutions one can give it, and there are many things that cannot be represented to the life, without using this colour. In a word, it is not so difficult to be made as people imagine, altho' the Chinese use lamp black, drawn from divers matters, yet the best is made of hogs grease, burnt in a lamp, they mix a sort of oil with it, to make it sweeter, and pleasant odours, to suppress the ill smell of the grease and oil. After having reduced it to a consistence, they make of the paste little lozenges, which they cast in a mould, it is at first very heavy, but when it is very hard, it is not so weighty by half, and that, which they give for a pound, weighs not above eight or ten ounces.

The binding of books in China is likewise very pretty and curious, tho' it comes much short of ours; they don't gild upon the edges, nor so much as colour them. The ordinary books are covered with a grey pasteboard, handsome enough. They bind others according as they please, in a fine satin, or a kind of flower'd taffaty, that is very cheap, and is commonly made on purpose for this use. I have seen some covered with rich silk, flower'd with gold and silver, the form is always the same, but they are at cost, according to the matter they are willing to employ. I should never have presumed, my lord, to take the liberty to set down all these minute circumstances, if I were not persuaded, that a little account is not always disagreeable to learned men, who, like you, are acquainted beforehand with the most

most ~~essential~~ matters But I now present you with something more solid, which, without doubt, you may have read, but I add it in this place briefly, only to refresh your memory

The first history, that was in the world, was, without all controversy, the book of Genesis, but it must be granted, that, of all the books that have reached our knowledge, those of China are the first that have been published they name them by way of excellence, The Five Volumes, and the Chinese hold nothing more sacred than the doctrine therein taught It is about four thousand three hundred years since the emperor Hoamti, after he had invented the characters, composed treatises of astronomy, arithmetick, and medicine

Near upon three hundred years after, they made a collection of all the ordinances, and writ the history of king Yao, a prince recommendable for his piety, prudence, and the mighty care he took to establish a model of government in the state Chun and Isu, his successors, were no less famous, they regulated the ceremonies of the sacrifices, that they were bound to offer to the supreme Master of heaven, and to the inferior spirits that presided over rivers and mountains, they divided the empire into provinces, they fix'd their different situation, with respect to the constellations of heaven, they regulated the taxes that the people were to pay, they made several other constitutions very wholesome and proper for introducing good manners, and very necessary for the publick quiet All these things were written, and whatever, these three emperors have left behind them to posterity, hath been always considered by the Chinese as oracles

Nevertheless, because some things ever escape the notice of the first laws, the emperors who reigned a thousand seven hundred and seventy six years before our Saviour, upon mature deliberation, and by the  
student

prudent counsel and advice of their ministers, thought themselves obliged to make an addition, or new one. They report that Caotson, a prince, in whom piety and zeal in religion did infinitely enhance the noble qualities he had received from nature, saw in a dream the figure of a man coming from heaven after he awoke, the image remained so lively engraven upon his mind, that he caused him to be sought for, and found him at length amongst the masons. So soon as this man apply'd himself to the government, he seemed to be inspired, and made several beneficial regulations, that perfected the ancient ordinances, which were again augmented under succeeding reigns, insomuch that, being all collected together, there was a book composed of them which the Chinese call • Chu kim, which amongst them is of ~~great~~ <sup>great</sup> authority, in reference to the politick state, as Moses and the prophets are amongst the Jews, as to what concerns the worship of God, and form of religion.

The second book, which the Chinese reverence for its antiquity, is a long continuation and series of odes and poems, composed under the reigns of the third race† where are described the manners and customs of the petty kings of China, who govern'd the provinces under the emperor's jurisdiction. Confucius mentions them with great marks of respect, which makes us incline to judge, that in process of time they had been corrupted by a mixture of several bad pieces, since several things are found in them very ridiculous, not to say impious. Tchu, founder of the monarchy, composed before that time poems of this nature; but they were so obscure, that what care so ever they took to put a good construction on them, yet have they been forced to confess that they were not intelligible. This obscurity, so unfathomable to the most learned heads.

h.2.h

• The first book called *Chu kim*

† The second book *Chu kim*

hath given occasion to many superstitions The  
Bonzes wrest them to a wrong use, and make them  
say what they please, they are to them an inex-  
haustible fountain of fables and chimeras, which  
they make use of, to cause the people to pin their  
faith upon their sleeve However, they have com-  
piled a \* tome of them, which holds the third rank  
amongst classick authors

The † fourth contains the history of several  
princes, their virtues, vices, and maxims of the  
government, that have been collected by Confucius,  
and commented upon by his disciples

The ‡ fifth treats of customs and ceremonies  
There is mention made of temples, sacred vessels;  
of the duty of children to their parents, and wives  
to their husbands, rules of real friendship, civilities  
at feasts, of hospitality, musick, war, of funeral  
honours, and of a thousand other things that re-  
gard society

These five books are very ancient, and all the  
others, that have any authority in the empire, are no-  
thing but copies, or interpretations of them Amongst  
abundance of authors who have taken pains about  
these so famous originals, none is so conspicuous and  
eminent as Confucius, they have a great esteem, espe-  
cially for that which he compiled in four books, up-  
on the ancient laws, which are look'd upon as the  
rule of perfect government There he treats of  
the great art of reigning, of mediocrity, virtues,  
and vices, of the nature of things, and of com-  
mon duties This last tome, notwithstanding, is not  
so much the work of Confucius, as of Mencius  
his disciple, whose life was less regular than that  
of his master, but his stile more eloquent and  
pleasant

Besides

\* The third book *U-tun*  
‡ The fifth *Lo-shi*

† The fourth *Ti-tun* *152.*

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Besides these nine books, there be <sup>many</sup> others much in vogue, as the universal history of the empire, the truth of which is no less confirmed in China, than it is in our most noted histories in Europe. The books that treat of the education of children, of obedience, of loyalty, are ascribed to Confucius. You have some which discourse of medicine, agriculture, plants, of the military art, of arts liberal and mechanick, of particular histories, astronomy, philosophy, and a great many other parts of mathematicks. In short, they have their romances, comedies, and, what I place in the same rank, an abundance of treatises composed by the Bonzes, concerning the worship of the deities of the country, which they alter, diminish, and increase, according as they find it necessary to inveigle the people, and swell their revenues. . .

Of all these books they have compiled numerous libraries, some whereof were composed of above forty thousand volumes; but all these brave works that antiquity took so much pains to bring forth, which private persons had amassed with so vast expences, were well-nigh all destroyed by the tyrannical order of one emperor. Three hundred years, or thereabouts, after the death of Confucius, that is to say, two hundred years before the birth of our Saviour, the emperor Chihoamti, illustrious by his valour and military science, of which he was master beyond all his predecessors, and still more famous for the prodigious wall he caused to be built, to secure his territories from the interruptions of the Tartars, resolved to extirpate all sciences; and not satisfied with putting a great number of doctors to death, he ordered his subjects, upon pain of death, to set fire on all the books in the empire, except those that treated on agriculture, medicine, and sorcery.

This conflagration, the most remarkable that ever the republic of letters suffered, had like to have utterly

men: his life hath been writ by several persons: I shall report what they commonly say of it.

Confucius, whom the Chinese name Coum-tse, was born in the province of Quamtun, the thirty-seventh year of the reign of the emperor Kim, four hundred fourscore and three years before the incarnation of our Saviour; the death of his father, that preceded his birth, made them call him Tceffe, which signifies Child of Sorrow; he derived his pedigree from Tiny, twenty-seventh emperor of the second race: how illustrious soever this family might be by a long series of kings, it became much more so by the life of this great man: He eclipsed all his ancestors, but he gave his posterity a lustre that still continues, after more than two thousand years. China acknowledges no true nobility but in this family, mightily respected by sovereigns, who have derived from thence, as from the source, the laws of perfect government, and no less beloved by the people, to whose happiness he hath so successfully contributed.

Confucius did not proceed by the ordinary degrees of childhood, he seemed rational a great deal sooner than other men, for he took delight in nothing that other children are fond of: Playing, going abroad, amusements proper to his age, did not at all concern him; he had a grave, a serious deportment, that gained him respect, and was, at that very time, a presage of what one day he was like to be. but that, which distinguisheth him the most, was his exemplary and unbiassed piety. He honoured his relations, he endeavoured in all things to imitate his grandfather, who lived then in China, respected and admired by all for his exemplary sanctity, and it was observable, that he never eat any thing but he prostrated himself upon the ground, and offered it to the supreme Lord of heaven.

When

When he was a child, hearing his grandfather fetch a deep sigh, he came up to him, and when he had saluted him, bowing several times to the very ground, May I be so bold, says he, without injuring the respect I owe you, to ask you the occasion of your grief? Perhaps, you are afraid that your posterity may neglect the care of virtue, and dishonour you by their vice. What put this thought into your head? says Coum-tse to him, and where have you learned to speak after this manner? From yourself, reply'd Confucius; I attentively hear you every time you speak, and I have often heard you say, that a son, who by his manner of living does not keep up to the reputation of his ancestors, degenerates from them, and does not deserve to bear their name. When you spoke after that manner, did not you think of me? and might not that be the thing that troubles you? This good old man was overjoy'd at this discourse, and after that seem'd not to be disquieted.

Confucius, after his grandfather's death, was a constant adherer to Tsem-se, a famous doctor of those times; and, under the conduct of so great a master, he became in a short time a mighty proficient in the knowledge of antiquity, which he look'd upon, even then, as the most perfect model. This love for the ancients had like one day, to have cost him his life, tho' he was then but sixteen years of age: for, discoursing with a person of the highest quality, who spoke of the obscurity and unprofitableness of the Chinese books, this child read him somewhat too severe a lecture concerning the respect that is due to them.

The books you speak of, says Confucius, contain profound abstruse, &c. sense of such nature, as can be understood but by the learned: the people would undervalue them, could they comprehend them of themselves. This dependence of judgments, by which the

196 *Of the Language, Characters, Books,*  
stupid are subject to the learned, is very profitable,  
and useful in human society were all families equal-  
ly rich, and equally powerful, there would remain  
no form of government: but there would happen yet  
a more strange disorder, if men were equally know-  
ing, every one would be for governing, and nobody  
would believe himself obliged to obey

Some time ago, added this witty child; one of  
the vulgar spoke to me as you do, I did not wor-  
der at it, but I admire at present, that a doctor  
as you are, should speak to me like this man of  
the dregs of the people This discourse, one would  
think, should gain the affection and respect of the  
Mandarin but confusion, that possess'd him to  
be thus gravelled by a child, did so nettle him  
that he resolved to be revenged He caused his  
house to be invested by his menial servants, and,  
without doubt, he would have committed some  
violence, had not the king, who had notice of it,  
given him orders to withdraw

When Confucius was a little more advanced in  
years, he made a collection of the most excellent  
maxims of the ancients, which he intended to fol-  
low, and inspire into the people Each province  
was at that time a distinct kingdom, which a prince,  
in subjection to the emperor, governed by particu-  
lar laws he levied taxes, disposed of all places  
of trust, and made peace as he judged expedient  
These petty kings had sometimes differences among  
them, the emperor himself stood in fear of them,  
and had not always authority enough to make  
himself be obey'd by them

Confucius being persuaded that the people would  
never be happy, so long as interest, ambition, and  
false policy should reign in all these petty courts, re-  
solved to preach up a severe morality, to prevail  
upon men to condemn riches and worldly pleasures,  
and esteem temperance, justice, and other virtues.



to inspire them with grandeur and magnanimity, proof against all the temptations of this life, a sincerity incapable of the least disguise, even in respect of the greatest princes; in fine, to teach them a kind of life that should oppose the passions, and should intirely cultivate reason and virtue.

That which is most to be admired is, That he preached more by his example than by his words; so that he every where reaped very considerable fruit from his labours. Kings were governed by his counsels, the people revered him as a saint; every body commended him, and even those, who could not be brought to imitate his actions, did nevertheless admire them: but sometimes he took upon him such a severity, as his greatest friends and admirers could never comply with

Being chosen to fill a considerable place of trust in the kingdom of Lou, inless than three months time, after he exercised the charge, he introduced such a prodigious change, that the court and provinces were quite another thing than they were before. The neighbouring princes began to be jealous; they perceived, that a king, ruled by a man of this character, would quickly render himself too powerful, since nothing is more conducive to make a state flourish than order, and an exact observance of laws. The king of Tci assembled his ministers, and propounded to them an expedient to put a stop to the carriere of this new government: after a long deliberation, this was the expedient they bethought themselves of.

They chose a great company of young maids, handsome, well educated, and perfectly well instructed in whatsoever might please. Then, under pretence of an ambassy, they presented them to the king of Lou, and to the principal officers of his court; the present was joyfully accepted, and obtained its desired effect; they thought of nothing but of diverting the fair strangers;

for several months together there was nothing but feasting, dancing, and comedies, and pleasure was the only business of the court.

Confucius, perceiving that the publick affairs would suffer by it, endeavoured to bring men to themselves again; but this new kind of life had so charmed them, that all his endeavours proved ineffectual: there was no remedy, the severity of the philosopher, whether he would or no, must give place to the gallantry and irregularities of courtiers. So that he thought it did not stand with his reputation to remain any longer in a place where reason was not listened to, and he resigned up his place to the prince, and sought other kingdoms more inclinable to follow his maxims.

But he met with great obstacles, and run from province to province, almost without reaping any advantage; because the politicians dreaded him, and the ministers of princes had no mind to have a competitor, who was able to lessen their authority, or deprive them of their credit. So that, forsaken by all the world, he was often reduced to the utmost extremity, in danger of being starved, or to lose his life by the conspiracy of mischievous men. Nevertheless, all these disgraces did not move him; and he would often say, *That the cause he defended was too good to apprehend any evil consequences from it; that there was not that man so powerful, that could hurt him; and that, when a man is elevated to heaven by a sincere desire of perfection, he is so far from fearing a tempest, that he does not so much as hear the noise in this lower world.*

So that he was never weary of instructing those who loved virtue. Amongst a great company of disciples that put themselves under his tuition; he employ'd some to write a fair hand; others apply'd themselves to argue exactly, and to deliver them-

selves

selves eloquently in publick He would have others study to frame to themselves a true idea of a good government but he counselled those, for whom he had a more particular kindness, to govern themselves well, to cultivate their minds by meditation, and to purify their hearts by virtue

Human nature, would he often say, came from Heaven to us in its pure and perfect, in process of time, ignorance, the passions and evil examples have corrupted it, all consists in the re-instating it, and giving it its primitive beauty and, that we may be perfect, we must re-ascend to that point, from whence we have descended Obey Heaven, and follow all the orders of him who governs it Love your neighbour as yourself, never suffer your senses to be the rule of your conduct, but bearken to reason in all things It will instruct you to think well, to speak discreetly, and to perform all your actions holily He sent six hundred of his disciples into different places of the empire, to reform the manners of the people, and not satisfy'd to benefit his own country, he often took a resolution to pass the seas, and extend his doctrine to the extremity of the universe There is scarce any thing can be added either to his zeal, or to the purity of his morality, they were so superlative Methinks he sometimes speaks like a doctor of the new law, rather than like a man that was brought up in the corruption of the law of nature and that, which persuades me, that hypocrisy had no share in what he said, is, That his actions never bely'd his maxims In fine, his gravity and mildness in the use of the world, his rigorous abstinence (for he pass'd for the soberest man of the empire) his contempt of the good things of the world, that continual attention and watchfulness over his actions, and then (which we find not among the sages of antiquity) his humility and modesty would make a man apt to judge that he was not a meer philosopher formed by

reason, but a man inspired by God for the reformation of this new world

The Chinese report, that he had frequently this saying in his mouth, *It is in the West where the true saint is found* and this sentence was so imprinted upon the spirit of the learned, that, sixty-five years after the birth of our Saviour, the emperor Mimi-ti, touched with these words, and determined by the image of a man that appeared to him in a dream coming from the West, sent ambassadors that way, with strict orders to continue their journey till they should meet the saint whom Heaven had acquainted him with

It was much about the same time that St Thomas preached the christian faith in the Indies; now, if these Mandarinés had followed his orders, peradventure China might have received benefit from the preaching of this apostle. But the danger of the sea, that they feared, made them stop at the first island, where they found the idol Fo, or Foe, who had corrupted the Indies several years before with his damnable doctrine they learned the superstitions of the country, and, at their return, propagated idolatry and atheism in all the empire

Confucius lived secretly three years, but spent the latter end of his days in sorrow, in seeing the wickedness that reigned amongst the people. He has been often heard to say, *The empire is fallen, and an high edifice was destroyed*; to denote that the grand system of perfection, that he had erected with so much care in all the realms, was as good as overthrown. Kings, said he, one day, during his last sickness, *do not follow my maxims; I do no good in the world, wherefore it is time I should depart out of it*. At that very moment he fell into a lethargy that continued seven days, at the end of which, he gave up the ghost in the embraces of his disciples,

He was lamented by the whole empire, that from that very time honoured him as a saint, and influenced posterity with a veneration of him, which in all probability will never have an end but with the world. Kings have built palaces for him after his death in all the provinces, whither the learned at certain times go to pay him honours. There are to be seen in several places these titles of honour writ in large characters, *To the great Master To the Lead Doctor To the Saint To him who taught Emperors and Kings*. However, which is very extraordinary, the Chinese did never deify him, they, I say, who have given the quality of God, or, as they speak, the quality of pure spirits to many Mandarines, much inferior to him, as if Heaven, that had given him birth for the reformation of manners, was unwilling that such a well ordered life, should, after his death, administer occasion of superstition and idolatry.

They preserve to this day in China mimicks that represent him to the life, and pretty well agree with what history hath left us concerning him. He was no handsome man; he had moreover upon his forehead a swelling, or a kind of wen, that disfigured him, which he made others often to take notice of to humble him, otherwise his stature was so comely and proportionable, his behaviour so grave, his voice so strong and shrill, that if he spoke with never so little warmth, one could not chuse but be affected, and hear him with respect. but the maxims of morality he hath scattered here and there in his works, or which his disciples took care to collect, draw a much more lively and advantageous portraiture of his soul. There would need an intire volume to relate them all. I have taken the few following out of a book composed by one of the principal Mandarines of the empire, who rules at present in Pekin.

## Maxim I.

*Beauty is not to be desired by a wise man.*

Confucius, going to see the king of a province, found him with a lord his favourite who was mighty beautiful. The king, so soon as he saw him come in, said to him smiling, *Confucius, if thy countenance could be changed, I would willingly give you all the beauty of this young courtier.* Sir, answered the philosopher, *that is not the thing I wish; the exterior form of a man is of little use to the publick good. What do you desire then,* said the prince? *I desire,* my lord; says he, *in all the members of the empire that just symmetry that makes up the beauty of the government, and keeps the body of the state from deformity.*

## Maxim II.

*A man must keep within bounds, if he means to be happy.*

So soon as he understood that his mother was dead, he came into his country to pay his last devoirs to her; he wept for her bitterly, and spent three days without eating, which was perhaps too much, yet a philosopher of that country thought it not enough; who said to Confucius: *As for me, I have been seven days without taking sustenance, upon the death of my relations; and you, who are grandson to a saint, on whom all the world casts their eyes to see how you will imitate him, you have satisfied yourself with three days abstinence.* Confucius answered him, *Ceremonies have been enjoined by the ancients to restrain the indiscret, and stir up the backward. It is our duty to be obedient to the laws, if we would not go astray; it is in this golden mean that wisdom consists. That you may never stray out of it, remember that virtue is not an excess, and that perfection hath its limits.*

## Maxim III.

*A man ought to change often, if he would be constant in wisdom.*

A person of quality said one day to Confucius, *Your grandfather was never wanting in any duty of civility,*

crudity, in respect of great persons, nevertheless *his doctrine, tho' holy, never obtained, or got footing* How do you imagine then that yours should be followed, seeing you have a magisterial gravity which is very rough to all men, and proceeds sometimes to haughtiness? This is not the way to be welcome at princes courts. Every age hath its ways, answered Confucius, in my grandfather's time princes and officers were polite, they delighted in order, every one kept his station, to insinuate a man's self in their affections, it behoved a man to be polite, and regular, like them. At this day men value nothing but courage and haughtiness, wherewith princes endeavour to inspire their officers; a man ought to change with the world, that he may be in a capacity to win it. A wise man would cease so to be, should he always act as the wise men of former times acted.

Maxim IV

*The nobility are not always the greatest men in the kingdom*

Confucius, coming to the court of one of the kings of China, was very well received. This prince allowed him an apartment in his palace, and came to visit him there himself, at the end of the visit he said to him, You come not for nothing into my state, probably you have a design to do me some good. My lord, replied Confucius, I am but a *unprofitable man*, yet I avow, if your majesty will but follow my counsel, you will not be the worse for it. my intent is to present to you wise men, to fill the principal places of your state. With all my heart, says the prince, Who are they? My lord, Li in, the son of a husbandman, is a man on whom you may rely. The king burst out a laughing. How, says he, an husbandman? I have not employment enough for the lords of my court, and would you have me take a labourer into my service.

The philosopher, without being moved, replied, Virtue is of all trades and conditions, altho' it is more commonly annexed to a mean condition, we have two kingdoms

kingdoms in the empire that have been founded by two labourers\* What inconvenience is there, tho' a man of that character govern yours? Believe me, sir, the court hath hitherto supply'd you with a great company of evil ministers, suffer a country village to present you with a wise man You want employments, you say, to place all the lords that encompass you If virtue alone were rewarded, you would find in your court more places than officers, nay, and perhaps would be forced to call for labourers to supply them When the body of the nobility does not furnish the state with great men, the great men that may be found amongst the people must be chosen, and of them must be composed the body of the nobility

## Maxim V

*A small fault often denotes great qualities*

He one day advised the king of Quei to set a certain great officer at the head of his army, but the king excused himself for not doing it, because that, being formerly a Mandarin, he took a couple of eggs from a country fellow *A man who hath abused his authority, says he, deserves not any longer to command* These sentiments of equity, replied Confucius, are very laudable in a king, but perhaps the Mandarin's moderation, that stole but two eggs, is no less to be admired Such a small fault, in the whole life of a man, denotes in him great qualities In a word, a prudent prince makes use of his subjects in the government, as a carpenter uses timber in his works, he does not reject one good beam, because there is a flaw in it, provided it be strong enough to support a whole edifice I would not advise your majesty, for the loss of a couple of eggs, to turn off a captain, who may conquer you two realms

## Maxim VI

*A wise prince will be no great speaker, nor deliver his opinion first*

The



The same king one day held a council in presence of Confucius, where he spoke of some affairs with such a show of wit, that his ministers applauded him, and forthwith allowed him to be in the right, and comply'd with him, without more ado. At the close this king said to Confucius, *What's your judgment of the course we have taken in our last deliberation?* Sir, says the philosopher, *I do not perceive that they have yet deliberated: you spoke with a great deal of wit; your ministers, very desirous to please you, have faithfully repeated the discourse; they have told your opinion, and not their own; and, when you adjourned the assembly, I still expected the beginning of the council.*

Some days after the same king asked him his advice concerning the present government: He answered him, *No body speaks ill of it. That is my desire,* says the king. *And that, sir, is what you ought not to desire,* reply'd Confucius: *When a sick person is forced to be fed with flattering promises of perfect health, he is not far from death; a man is bound to discover to the prince the defects of the mind, with the same liberty men discover to the physician the maladies of the body.*

#### Maxim VII.

*The wise man goes forward apace, because the right way is always the shortest; on the contrary, the crafty politician arrives later at his end, because he walks in by-ways and crooked paths.*

The king of Ouei confessed to Confucius, that there was nothing so fine as wisdom; but the difficulty of acquiring it discouraged the most resolute, and diverted the best disposed minds. *As for my part,* added he, *I have used endeavours, but all in vain: I am resolv'd to torment myself no longer about it, and a small parcel of policy will supply the defect of that wisdom that is necessary to good governing.* Sir, answered Confucius, *'tis true, wisdom is seated on a lofty*

lofty place, but the road to it is not so difficult as people imagine, it grows plainer and plainer, according as you go on; and, once got at it, one cannot go back without running great danger to fall down the precipice; in such a sort, that a wise man cannot cease being so, without doing violence to himself in some respect.

But do you think that a prince hath no trouble when he marches in the indirect paths of an artificial and knavish policy? All these refinements and subtleties perplex the spirit: and how shall one disengage one's self? None enter into a maze without danger, since you often lose your way there; and, if you chance to get out, it is after a great many wanderings, and errors, and disquiets of mind. Take you which way you please; as for me, sir, I am persuaded, that in a popular government, solid and constant virtue goes further than the most subtle and refined policy.

#### Maxim VIII.

Those, who desire the most perfect state, do not always search the perfection of the state, but the sweetness: Would you be fix'd in the world? Fix this in your mind, that to take up a new course of life is nothing else but to pass from one trouble to another.

A prince, being wrought upon by the life that Confucius led, perceived those first desires of wisdom springing up in his heart; that a good education and good examples are wont to infuse into young persons, when they have not been yet corrupted by the commerce of the world. He went to find him out, and told him, That he was resolved to abandon all things to become one of his disciples; for, the truth is, there are a thousand sorrows to be undergone in that course of life, wherein my virtue might be lost, whereas yours seems to me full of sweetness and delight.

Since 'tis the sweetness you look for in my state, answered Confucius, I should not advise you to enter upon it: a man oftentimes meets with trouble, the more

he avoids it. Heaven, which hath inspired me with the love of a private life, hath been pleased to send you into the world to rule. Be a king, and do not seek after peace too much, but rather, if you be not willing to lose your states, behave yourself gallantly against your enemies; but fight more courageously against your passions, and against being in love with a sweet and easy life, if you have not a mind to destroy yourself.

Maxim IX.

Those who are diligent, and would do all, put off many things till the next day.

His own son said to him one day, I carefully apply myself to all sorts of study, I omit nothing whereby to become a good scholar, and yet I make small progress. His wise father said to him, Omit something, and you will make a great progress. Amongst all those that take long journies a foot, did you ever see one that ran? In all things you must go orderly to work, and not desire to embrace that which is not suitable to your abilities, otherwise your labour will be useless. The saints first of all apply themselves to the most easy things; success gives them courage and strength to grapple with more difficult things; by little and little they become perfect. Those, who like you would do all in one day, do nothing all their life. On the other hand, those, who never apply themselves but to one thing, find at the long run that they have done all.

Maxim X.

One ought not to wonder that the wise man walks slower in the way of virtue, than the ill man does in that of vice; passion hurries, and wisdom guides.

One of his friends complained of the small progress he made in virtue; I have labour'd, said he, these several years to imitate the primitive saints, and I am still imperfect, had I but never so little applied myself to imitate the wicked, and follow their example,

208. *Of the Language, Characters, Books,*

*I should have rid a great deal of ground in a short space; why is it not so easy to attain to perfection in virtue as in vice?*

*This is no wonder, says Confucius, virtue is on high, and vice is in the lowest place. It requires pains and time to go upward, one minute sufficeth to fall down the precipice. However, let me intreat you not to let yourself be abused by this seeming easiness. It is true, that one is sooner determined to evil than to good; but seeing one repents of it at length, it is a certain sign that there is less trouble to do well, than to persevere in evil.*

*Maxim XI.*

*True nobility does not consist in blood, but in merit; we are truly high and great, when virtue prevents our groveling with the rest of mankind.*

*Confucius, seeing a man carry a fish, sighed, and told them who demanded the reason of it: This fish, that might have easily preserved its life, hath lost it notwithstanding, by complying with the enticing pleasures of a deceitful bait; yet this fish has a good plea, because she has not reason; but are men excusable, to lose virtue that is much more precious than life, in letting themselves be catched by the baits that the good things and vanity of the world present them with? If we knew what we wanted, we should pursue other courses to obtain it. Would you be rich; condemn every thing, nay, even the contempt and scorn men cast upon you: That man is raised to a pitch far above others, when calumny and reproaches cannot reach him.*

*Maxim XII.*

*In the state wherein we are, perseverance in well-doing consists not so much in not falling, as in rising again as often as we fall.*

*You are very happy, Confucius, said some Mandarines that he instructed, because you have arrived at the highest degree of virtue; it is a long time, I'll warrant, since you left sin, as for us, what efforts sever we make*

make to become good men; there passés not a day but we commit considerable faults. Altho' every fault be blameable, says Confucius; you are not so unhappy as you think, in committing many: your life, as well as mine, is a long journey; the way is difficult; and our reason, half extinct by passions, furnishes but little light to guide us: what means is there to avoid stumbling sometimes in the dark? when one gets up again, the fall retards our journey, but does not quite put it off and interrupt it. It would be an unhappiness for us, to commit no more but one, like the wicked that fall but once, because the first precipice stops them; but honest good men, that continue their walking, fall often.

### Maxim XIII.

No man knows half of his own faults; he would blush to appear to the eyes of others; what he appears to himself.

One complained one day, That nature, in bestowing two eyes upon men to behold the beauty of bodies, had bestowed none on them that are able to see minds, and discover the secrets of hearts: thus virtue and vice, say they, are confounded in the world.

Confucius said, You and I should be in a woful taking, if we were not cut short as to that matter; for we should not secure our own failings and weaknesses, we gain more by it than you are aware of; for I maintain that the philosopher would suffer more to appear weak, than the wicked man to appear vicious.

*For a man to confess his faults, when he is reproved for them, is modesty.*

*To lay them open to his friend is ingenuity, and confidence.*

*To reprove himself for them is humility.*

*But to go preach them to every body is, if one have not a great care, a piece of pride.*

By this scantling of Confucius's philosophy, you may judge, my lord, that reason is of all times, and of all places. Seneca hath spoken nothing better; and had I the leisure, as I have a design to make an intire collection of the maxims of our philosopher, peradventure no requisite would be wanting to give him a place amongst our sages of antiquity. I wish, at least, my lord, that the portraiture, I have offered, may not displease you: were he still alive at this day, as much a philosopher as he is, I am sure he would be sensible of the approbation you should afford him. Such a testimony as yours, always clear, always sincere, must needs do a kindness to the greatest men. Perhaps hitherto in France they have not justly valued what is so much honoured in the East: but, so soon as you shall please to honour him with your esteem, every body will be persuaded that antiquity hath not flattered him, and that China, in choosing him for a master and a doctor, hath done justice to his merit. I am with a most profound respect,

LETTER VIII.

To my Lord Philipeaux, Secretary of State.

Of the particular Character of the Wit and Temper of the Chinese.

My Lord,

IF in this letter, which I have the honour to write to you, I confine myself only to treat of what concerns the particular character and genius of the Chinese, it is not because I forget the obligation I lie under, to give you an exact account of all the other things we are acquainted with in our voyages; yet I supposed that I could not more fitly begin to discharge this duty, than by entertaining you, at the first sight, with that which naturally ought to be pleasant to you; a captain would more willingly hear a discourse of wars, and of the bravery of the Tartars, and a courtier of the gentility of the Chinese, but when a man has such extraordinary parts as you have, and is heir to a family that has always signalized itself by its insight into sciences, and penetration in the management of the most important affairs, I was apt to believe that one could not treat of a subject that ~~could~~ be more proper, and more delightful to you.

Of all the people of the habitable world, there is not any one that does not stand upon his wit and ingenuity, and oftentimes the most barbarous prefer themselves before the most polite and accomplished. The inhabitants of the Cape of Good Hope, whom we cannot represent to ourselves ~~without a~~ <sup>with a</sup> head of horror, whom we can scarcely give ourselves leave to rank amongst men, do nevertheless look upon the Europeans as slaves, and upon the Hollanders as no other than a

company of stupid fellows, not vers'd in the method of government. The people of Siam, whose physiognomy is well enough known in France, who have in the Indies souls adapted to their bodies, do usually say, That Heaven, in distributing its benefits and natural qualities, hath granted to the French the bravery and science of war; to the English, the art of navigation; to the Hollanders, a particular knack in trading; to the Chinese, the wisdom of well-governing; but that it hath given wit to the people of Siam. Had not they intimated it to us, perhaps we should not have made such a reflexion, for it is a discovery that we owe to them. After all, we must not wonder if the Chinese, who term all the people of the East blind, have reserved to themselves the preheminance, and have believed themselves to be, without all dispute, the most intelligent nation in the world.

There is no question to be made but they are an ingenious people, but methinks no body yet hath been truly acquainted with their character. To see their libraries, universities, the prodigious number of their doctors, their observatories, and the care they take to be exact in their observations, one would be apt to conclude, that this nation is not only ingenious, but perfectly well vers'd in all sorts of sciences; that they have a vast reach, invention, and a genius for every thing. Nevertheless, albeit for these four thousand years, they have allowed recompences to learned and expert men; and tho' the fortune of an infinite number of men depends upon their good parts, yet have they not had one single man, of great achievements in speculative science; they have discovered all these precious mines, without troubling themselves to dig for them; enjoying peaceably, for so many ages, the reputation of the most knowing men in the world, because they see no body but who are more ignorant than themselves.



So that I suppose I may safely aver, without offending them any injury, that amongst the qualities wherewith Heaven hath respectively enriched the people of the world, they have not shewed that spirit of penetration and exactness which is so necessary to those who addict themselves to the search of nature. Nor have they that logick which we have so much improved, that geometry that we in France have brought to such a high degree of perfection, which may pass for the master-piece of human understanding, which yet will never get admittance into their academies; and, maugre all the natural pride that possesses them, they will not stick to confess, That, as to these matters, the Europeans will in all human probability be their masters.

It is true, a philosophy they have; it is likewise true, that they lay down certain principles for the explaining the composition of bodies, their propriety, their effects. Neither are they altogether ignorant in anatomy; nay, they grant a circulation of the blood and humours; but all their notions are so general, confused, and most an end so false, that I am afraid in this place to particularize them.

Their arithmetick is more perfect, altho' they do not make use of the cypher, as we do, which is notwithstanding of great use. They do not practise the rules of arithmetick by calculation; but they use an instrument composed of a little board a foot and an half long, cross which they score ten or twelve little parallel lines or sticks, upon which are strung several moveable buttons; by putting them together, or by separating them one from another, they reckon almost as we do, by counters; but with such great dexterity and easiness, that they will keep pace with us. let him read a book of accounts ~~where so~~. At the end they find the operation performed, which they have a certain way to prove.

Their geometry is very superficial, it is restricted to a very few propositions, and to some problems of algebra, which they resolve without elements or principles, and that only by induction.

They pretend to be the inventors of musick, and to have heretofore carried it to its acme or perfection: but either they are mistaken, or they have quite lost it; for that they practise at this day is so imperfect, that it does not so much as deserve the name of musick.

As for astronomy, it must be confess'd, that never did people in the world addict themselves so constantly to it. This science is beholding to them for abundance of observations; but the history, that reports them in general, hath not been careful to descend to particulars, which would be necessary for the reaping all the benefit such mighty care seems to promise. However, it hath not been unprofitable to posterity. We have above 400 observations, as well of the eclipses and comets, as conjunctions, that make good their chronology, and may conduce to the perfecting of ours.

Altho' their tables were imperfect, yet have they been very serviceable to regulate the time; but, after a certain continuance of years, their astronomers were obliged to make some amendments therein, because they did not exactly agree with the heavens, till, in the beginning of this century, they attained some skill in our astronomy. The Europeans since have every way reformed their kalendar, which fineness has made them so famous, and so necessary that state, that nothing hath so much contributed to settle religion in that country, and also to deter it in the various circumstances of persecution it hath lain under.

If China hath been deficient in excellent mathematicians, they have at least had perfect astrologers; because, for the well succeeding in judicial astrology,

it sufficeth to be an able deceiver, and to have a knack of lying handsomely, which no nation can dispute with China. There have been for these many ages cheating mountebanks by profession, who promise by the insight they have in the motion and influence of the stars, the philosophers stone, and immortality. They mark in the almanack, every year, the good and bad days for building, marriages, for undertaking journeys and voyages, and for such like actions, the success whereof depends more upon the wisdom and discretion of men, than upon the influence of the heavens.

The missionaries fearing lest they might ascribe the fooleries and ridiculous superstitions to them, because they make them the authors of the kalendar, thought themselves obliged to make a publick declaration how little hand they have in the matter, they protested that they absolutely condemned them and the emperor, that is not subject to these weakneses, was willing they should explain themselves, as to that business, for his particular satisfaction.

Medicine hath not been quite neglected and laid aside, but because they wanted physics, or natural philosophy and anatomy, the foundation of it, they never made any great progress therein, yet must it be confessed that they have acquired a particular skill in quacks, that hath made them famous in the world. The emperor Hoampti composed a treatise of the same above four thousand years ago. Ever since that time the physicians of China have look'd upon that science as the foundation of all medicine.

They feel the pulse after such a manner as would make a man smile that is not accustomed to it. And they lay their four fingers along the artery, and press'd strongly and uniformly the

patient's wrist, they relax their fingers by degrees, till the blood, that was stopp'd by the pressing, hath retaken its usual course; then, a ~~moment~~ after, they begin again to press the arm close, which they continue a considerable time; after that, just like men that intended to touch the frets of a musical instrument, they rise and fall their fingers successively one after another, pinching softly, or hard, sometimes slower, sometimes faster, till such time as the artery answers to the touches which the physician moves, and till the strength, weakness, disorder, and other symptoms of the pulse be manifest.

They pretend that there never happens any extraordinary accident in the constitution, but does alter the blood, and consequently causes a different impression upon the vessels. It is not so much by reasoning and arguing that they are instructed in this point, as by a long experience, which much better discovers to them all these wonderful changes than theory and speculation.

When they have a long time been attentive to the voice of nature, that explains itself by the beatings of the pulse, they perfectly and truly perceive those differences, which to others seem imperceptible. The pervigilium and lethargy, loss of appetite, or desire to eat, the head-ach, weakness of stomach, fulness or emptiness, all these are the cause or the effect of some distemper in the mass of blood.

So that its motion will be at that time less frequent or quicker, fuller or weaker, uniform or irregular. Sometimes there will be an undulation or trembling, caused by the ebullition of the whole mass of the humours; which may be perceived like to a bell that trembles after it hath been rung; sometimes also the artery will not bear a stroke, but will swell by little and little. By pressing it, one will moreover be able to receive several effects that do not declare themselves to the bare touch; for at that

that time the course of the circulation, which is suspended or lessened, which begins again immediately after, with more force, will give occasion to judge variously and differently of the disposition of the heart, of the fermentation there performed, of the quality of the blood there prepared, of the obstacles that impede its passages, of gross and crude matter that overcharges it, of the nature of the spirits that too much rarify it, and precipitate transpiration. The Chinese physicians pretend to have, by long experience, distinguished all these differences of pulses, and to have been able to know all the distempers that are incident thereto; so that they hold the patient's hand a quarter of an hour at least; sometimes the right, sometimes the left, and sometimes both of them at the same time. And after all, as if they were inspired, they play the prophet: *You were never troubled with the head-ack,* say they, *but with an heaviness that bath made you drowsy; or else, You have lost your appetite, you will recover it again within three days precisely. This evening, about sunset, your head will be freer; your pulse indicates pain in the belly, unless you have eaten such or such meat; this indisposition will last five days, after which it will cease.* And so for other symptoms of the malady, which they find out or prognosticate pretty exactly, when they are expert in the science; for, as for others, they are commonly false prophets.

It is not to be questioned after all these testimonies we have, but that in this respect they have something extraordinary, nay, and even wonderful: however, a man should always mistrust them, and one cannot be too much upon his guard against them, because they make use of all means imaginable to get themselves secretly instructed concerning the patient's condition before they visit them. Nay, they are so cunning (to get themselves reputation)

as to feign a kind of distemper, which sometimes they themselves procure afterwards. A person told me, that, sending for a physician and a chirurgion to cure him of a wound, one of them told him, *That the malady was occasioned by a small worm that was insinuated into the flesh, which would infallibly produce a gangrene, if by some remedy or other it were not fetch'd out: that he was the only man in all the country that had this arcanum, and would put it in practice for his sake, provided he would not grudge him a considerable sum of money.* The sick person promised him he would not; and paid him part of it beforehand. But this cheating sophister, after divers unprofitable medicines, entangled, at last, a little worm in his plaister, which he pull'd out an hour after in triumph, as if it came out of the very wound. His companion, that gain'd nothing by the management of this business, afterwards detected it, but it was too late; and the chirurgion comforted up himself more easily for the loss of his reputation, than the sick person for the loss of his money.

However the case may stand as to the capacity of the Chinese physicians, yet certain it is, that they predict the distemper easier than they cure it; and men die in their hands as they do elsewhere. They prepare their own remedies, that ordinarily consist of pills; which, according as they are prepared, are either sudorifick, purge the blood and humours, fortify the stomach, suppress vapours; or are restringent, dispose to evacuation; but seldom work by stool. They do not let blood, nor know the clyster, but since they have had correspondence with the physicians of Macao. They do not disapprove the remedy, but name it *The Remedy of the Barbarians*. They apply cupping-glasses, not only upon the ~~scapulae~~ also upon the belly, to assuage the pain of the cholick.

They

They are in a manner also persuaded, that the majority of diseases are caused by malignant and corrupted wind that hath slipp'd into the muscles, and doth ill affect all the parts of the body : the most sure means to dissipate them is to apply, in different places, red-hot needles, or buttons of fire : this is their ordinary remedy. Once I seemed to be surprized at this practice, when a Chinese said, alluding to phlebotomy, *They treat you in Europe with the sword, but here they martyr us by fire, this mode will probably never alter, because physicians feel not the mischief they do us, and are not worse paid for tormenting us, than for curing us*

I cannot tell whether or no they might have learnt this violent remedy of the Indians, or whether the Indians themselves might not have received it from the Chinese physicians, but they pretend in the Indies that fire cures all diseases this persuasion, which they persist in, makes every day a great many miserable persons, whom they cauterize upon the slightest illness

Yet there be some maladies that are not curable, but by this means The people of the country, but especially the slaves, are much troubled with a violent cholick, which the Portuguese call Mordetchin, occasioned by the indigestion of the stomach, and accompanied, for the most part, with continual vomitings, the gripes it produceth are cruel, and the grief and anguish often deprives them of their wits This grief is infallibly mortal, if they do not remedy it after the following manner They lightly apply an iron peal red hot to the soles of the feet, if the patient shews any signs of feeling, they pass no further, and he is cured if he be insensible of this first operation, they lay it on harder, and still continue to per-~~the~~ peal, burning unmercifully to the very bone, without desisting, ~~until they~~ complain, which puts an end to the malady and remedy. But

if the fire, how violent soever, makes not itself be felt, they despair of healing, and in a short time the patient dies.

Amongst all the China remedies, there are none so much esteemed as cordials; they are provided with all sorts of them, and very natural ones, for they consist for the most part of herbs, leaves, and roots. Their simples are numerous; and, if the people of the country may be believed, they have all of them sovereign and experienced virtues. I brought along with me hither near four hundred, designed in their natural colours and figure, according to those the emperor caused to be painted for his closet. Father Vissdelou, one of the six jesuits his majesty sent thither Anno 1685, is very intent upon the translation of the Chinese Herbal; wherein are all the virtues and qualities of all those plants explained. This father, who hath accomplished himself in the knowledge of books, will thereto add particular reflexions of his own; and I make no question but what, he supplies us with thereupon, will enrich our botany, and satisfy the ingenious and curious.

Amongst these simples there are two that I may speak of beforehand: the first is the leaf of \* Thee, as they call it in China; they are much divided in their opinions, touching the properties they ascribe to it. Some do maintain that it hath admirable ones; others, that it is but a fancy and meer whim of the Europeans, that are always in love with novelties, and put a value upon that which they do not understand: in that, as in all other things where men do not agree, I think we ought to take the middle path.

In

\* Thee is a 茶 province of Fokien, it must be called *Tcha*; it is the term of the Mandarin language.



In China they are subject neither to gout, sciatica, nor stone; and many imagine, that Thee preserves them against all these distempers. The Tartars, that feed upon raw flesh, fall sick, and suffer continual indigestions so soon as ever they give over drinking of it; and, that they may have plenty of it, they bargain to furnish the emperor with almost all the horses that serve to remount his cavalry; when any one is troubled with a vertigo that overcharges the brain, he finds himself extremely relieved so soon as he accustoms himself to Thee. In France there are abundance of people that find it good for the gravel, crudities, head-aches; nay, some pretend to have been cured of the gout by it, almost miraculously; so quick and sensible has been its effect. All this proves that Thee is no chimera and conceit. Nay, some after drinking of it sleep the better, which argues that it is not proper to suppress fumes: some there be who never take it after meals, without experiencing mischievous effects; their digestion is interrupted and disturbed; and they find, a long time after, crudities, and a troublesome repletion. Others find no benefit by it neither in gout nor sciatica. A great many say, that it dries, makes lean, and that it obstructs; and that, if there be any good qualities in it, the most part of other leaves would in a manner produce the same effect. These experiments evince, that its virtue is not so universal as people imagine.

So that, in my opinion, one should speak moderately of it, both as to its good and bad qualities. Perhaps warm water alone is a good medicine against distempers, the cure of which they attribute to Thee; and there are several people that are exempt from many inconveniences, because they are used to drink warm liquor. Nevertheless, it is certain, that Thee is of a corrosive nature, for it attenuates hard victuals wherewith it is boiled, and consequently is pro-  
per

per for digestion, that is to say, for dissolution; which also proves, that it resists obstructions, and that liquors, impregnated with its particles and salts, carry off, and more easily separate whatsoever adheres to the tunics of the vessels. This very quality is proper to consume superfluous humours, to put into motion those that stagnate and corrupt, and to evacuate others, that cause the gout and sciatica: so that Thee, with caution, is a very good remedy, altho' it be not so effectual, nor universal, but that the temperament of certain persons, the height of the distemper, together with certain occult dispositions, may many times retard the effect, or even frustrate its virtue.

To use it with benefit, it is requisite to know it, for there is more than one sort of it. That of the province of Xensi is coarse, harsh, and unpleasant. The Tartars drink of it: there is necessary to them a stronger menstruum than to the Chinese, because they feed on raw flesh. It is exceeding cheap in the country, a pound of it will cost three pence. In this same province there is found a particular species of it, more resembling moss, than the leaves of a tree; and they pretend that the oldest is of excellent use in acute distempers. They likewise administer to sick people a third sort, whose leaves are very long and thick, and its goodness increases in proportion to its being kept; but that is not the Thee in use.

That which they commonly drink in China hath no particular name, because it is gathered any where in different territories and soils: it is good, the infusion is reddish, the taste faint and somewhat bitter: the people use it indifferently at all hours of the day, and it is their most usual drink.

But persons of quality use two other kinds that are in request in China. The first is called Thee Soumlo, 蘇木, of the place where it is gathered; the leaves are somewhat long, the infusion clear

clear and green when it is fresh, the taste pleasant, it smells, as they say in France, a little of violets, but ~~the~~ taste is not natural, and the Chinese have often assured me, that, to be good, it ought to have no taste at all. This is that they commonly present at visits, but it is exceeding corrosive, perhaps the sugar they mix with it here corrects its acrimony, but in China, where it is drunk pure, too great a use of it would be apt to spoil the stomach.

The second kind is called Thee Voui, the leaves that are little, and inclining to black, tinge the water with a yellow colour. The taste is delicious, and even the weakest stomach always agrees with it. In winter it is to be used temperately, but in summer one cannot drink too much. It is especially good in sweating, after travelling, running, or any other violent exercise. They give of it also to sick people, and those, who have any care of their health, drink no other. When I was at Siam, I heard them often talk of the flower of Thee, of imperial Thee, and of several other sorts of Thee, the price of which was yet more extraordinary, than the properties they ascribe to it. but in China I heard no such thing.

Generally speaking, that the Thee may prove excellent, it ought to be gathered early, when the leaves are yet small, tender, and juicy. They begin commonly to gather it in the months of March and April, according as the season is forward, they afterwards expose them to the steam of boiling water to soften them again, so soon as they are penetrated by it, they draw them over copper plates kept on the fire, which dries them by degrees, till they grow brown, and roll up of themselves in that manner we see them. If the Chinese were not such great cheats, their Thee would be better, but they oftentimes mix other herbs with it to ~~the~~ the size at a small charge, and so get more money by it.

so

so that it is a rare thing to meet with any purely without mixture.

It commonly grows in vallies, and at the foot of mountains; the choicest grows in stony soils; that which is planted in light grounds holds the second rank. The least valuable of all is found in yellow earth; but, in what place soever it is cultivated, care must be taken to expose it to the south; it gets more strength by that, and bears three years after being sown. Its root resembles that of a peach tree, and its flowers resemble white wild roses. The trees grow of all sizes, from two feet to an hundred, and some are to be met with that two men can scarce grasp in their arms; this is what the Chinese Herbal relates. But from my own observation I can give you the following account.

Entering upon the province of Fokien, they first made me observe Thee upon the declining of a little hill; it was not above five or six feet high; several stalks, each of which was an inch thick; joined together, and divided at the top into many small branches, composed a kind of cluster, much what like our myrtle. The trunk, tho' seemingly dry, yet bore very green branches and leaves. These leaves were drawn out in length at the point, pretty strait, an inch, or an inch and an half long, and indented in their whole circumference. The oldest seemed somewhat white without, they were hard, brittle, and bitter. The new ones, on the contrary, were soft; pliable; reddish, smooth, transparent, and pretty sweet to the taste; especially after they had been a little chewed.

It being the month of September, I found three sorts of fruit. In the new branches there were little fleshy pease, green without, and full of yellow grains within. In others, the fruit is as big as beans, but of different figures; some round, containing a pea; others drawn out in length, that contained two; some other of a triangular figure bore three, very like to those that bear the tallow-grain; so famous in

in China. The first membrane or skin, wherein these grains are infolded, is green, very thick, and somewhat even. The second is white, and thinner; under which a third very fine pellicle covers a kind of gland, or small nut perfectly round, that sticks to the bark by a little fibre, from whence it derives its nourishment. When this fruit is young, it hath bitterness in it; but, a day or two after it has been gathered, it withers, grows long and yellow, and wrinkles like an old hazel-nut; at length it becomes unctuous and very bitter. Besides that, I found a third sort of hard, old fruits, the first skin of which, between open and shut, shewed within a hard bark, brittle, and altogether resembling that of a chesnut. After I had broken it, scarce did I find any sign of fruit, so dry and flat was it grown. In some others the same fruit was pulverized, in others was found a little nut quite dried up, and covered with its first pellicle.

Amongst these fruits, a great number of them have no germ or bud, which they call females; those that have any may be sown, and produce trees; but the Chinese do commonly make use of grafts to plant. The better to understand the nature of this tree, I had the curiosity to taste the bark of the trunk and branches. I chewed likewise some of the wood and fibres; both of them seemed to me not at all bitter, so far from it, they left a relish sweet like that of liquorish, which yet one does not taste till some time after the chewing. Altho' this particular account may displease those that are not concerned in the knowledge of plants, yet I am sure that the more curious could wish a more nice and exact account, as to the delicate mixture of colours in the flower, the orderly disposition of their fibres, the conformation of the small branches and roots, and a thousand other particulars relating to the anatomy of them; but that is the business of time and

leisure I had but a quarter of an hour to examine the tree of which I have the honour to write to you.

There is in China another simple much more scarce than Thee, and upon that very account more valued, which they call Gin Sem. Gin signifies a man, and Sem a plant, or simple, as much as to say, The human simple, or the simple that resembles a man. Those who till this time have given another construction to these words are excusable, because they do not understand the emphasis of the Chinese characters, which do alone contain the true signification of terms. The learned give it abundance of other names in their writings, that sufficiently declare how much they set by it, as the spiritous simple, the pure spirits of the earth, the fat of the sea, the Panacea, and the remedy that dispenses immortality, and several others of that nature.

It is a root as thick as half the little finger, and as long again. It is divided into two branches, which makes a figure pretty like a man with his two legs, its colour inclines to yellow, and when it is kept any time it grows wrinkled, and dry'd like wood, the leaves it shoots forth are little, and terminate in a point, the branches are black, the flower violet, and the stalk covered with hair, they say that it produces but one of them, that this stalk produces three branches, and that each branch bears the leaves by fours and fives, it grows in the shade, in a moist soil, yet so slowly, that it comes not to perfection till after a long term of years. It is commonly found under a tree called Kia chu, little differing from the sycomore. Altho' they fetch it from several places, yet the best came heretofore from Petchy. That which is at this day in use is taken in Daotum, a province depending upon China, and situated in the oriental Tartary.

Of ~~all~~ cordials, according to the Chinese opinion, there are none comparable to Gin sem, it is sweet and

and delightful, altho' there be in it a little smack of bitterness, its effects are marvellous, it purifies the blood, fortifies the stomach, adds motion to a languid pulse, excites the natural heat, and withal augments the radical moisture. Physicians never know how to make an end when they specify its virtues, and have whole volumes of its different uses, I have a collection of their receipts that I should report intire in this place, if I were not afraid to be tedious, and trespass upon your patience. I may print them hereafter, together with a great many treatises relating to the physick or medicine of the Chinese. I shall only add, to what I have but now spoken, the usual course they take in distempers attended with faintness and swooning, whether it proceeds from some accident, or from old age.

Take a drachm of this root (you must begin with a little dose, and may increase it afterwards, according to the effect the former doses shall produce) dry it before the fire in a paper, or infuse it in wine, till it be sated by it; then cut it in little pieces with your teeth (and not with a knife, iron diminishing its virtue) and, when it is calcined, take the powder in form of a bolus, in warm water or wine, according as your distemper will permit. This will be an excellent cordial, and by continuing it you will find yourself sensibly fortified.

Take also the same quantity of Gin sem, or more if you be extremely weak, and when you have divided it into little pieces, infuse it in half a glass full of boiling water, or else you may boil it with the water itself; the water, if you drink it, will have the same effect. The root may serve a second time, but it abates of its force. They likewise make broths of it, electuaries, lozenges, and syrups, which are excellent remedies for all sorts of distempers.

They have also another root which the Portuguese in the Indies call Pao China, which is an excellent

sudorifick, very proper to purge the humours and corrupted blood; but the description of all these simples would make me deviate too much, and is not proper for such a short letter as this.

The physicians of China do not employ apothecaries for the composition of their medicines, they prescribe and give them at the same time themselves. Sometimes in the patient's chamber, when it may be conveniently done; and sometimes in their own houses. They think it strange the Europeans should act otherwise, and that they commit the principal point of the cure to men that are not concerned in curing them; and are not solicitous about the goodness of the drugs, provided they get rid of them to their advantage: but there is another disorder in China a great deal more dangerous than that they lay to our charge, and that is, that there every body is admitted to practise physick, like other mechanick arts, without examination, or taking their degrees: so that a pitiful fellow, that knows not where to put his head, studies perhaps a physick book two or three months, and sets up for a doctor, *cum privilegio*, at the expence of the patient's life, whom he chuseth to kill, rather than be forced to starve himself for lack of employment. The vulgar, tho' ill served by them, take a strong fancy for these pickpockets, and they would reckon themselves covetous, when they are indisposed, if they did not die, or cause their relations to die some other way, than by the way of nature.

Yet some of them you shall have confess their fault when it is too late; and I remember that an inhabitant of the city of Sucheu losing his daughter more through the ignorance of the physician, than by the power of the disease, was so enraged, that he caused a paper to be printed, wherein the bad conduct of the pretended doctor was laid open, with several reflections tending to decry him; he affix'd  
copies



copies of it in all the publick places, and caused them to be distributed to the principal houses of the city. This revenge, or, as he termed it, this zeal for the publick good, had the effect he promised himself. The physician lost, together with his reputation, all his practice, and was reduc'd to so great an extremity, that he quickly found himself in no condition to kill any body.

The Chinese, that are mean proficient in sciences, succeed much better in arts; and tho' they have not brought them to that degree of perfection we see them in Europe, yet know they in this respect not only what is necessary for the common use of life, but also whatever may contribute to convenience, neatness, commerce, and even to well-regulated magnificence; they would have got a great deal farther, had not the form of government, that hath prescribed bounds to the expences of private persons, put a stop to them. The workmen are extraordinary industrious, and if they be not so good at invention as we, yet do they easily comprehend our inventions, and imitate them tolerably well. There are made in several places of the empire glass, watches, pistols, bombs, and many other pieces of workmanship that they may thank us for; but they have had time out of mind gunpowder, printing, and the use of the compass, which are novel arts in Europe, for which perhaps we are obliged to them.

They divide the compass in twenty-four parts only, whereas we describe thirty-two; they evermore imagined that the needle did every where shew the true place of the pole, but by divers experiments, which we made before them, they have observed some variation and declension: The loadstone is found almost in every province; it comes also to them from Japan; but the use they make of it is in physick; 'tis bought by weight, and the best are not sold for above eight-pence or ten-pence an ounce.

I have brought one with me an inch and an half thick, which, tho' indifferently guarded, takes up nevertheless eleven pound weight; it will raise fourteen or fifteen when it is right fix'd. In fine, they are very dexterous in cutting them; for in France, tho' they bring them into all figures, yet it is not without great labour and cost. They cut mine in Nankim in less than two hours; the engine they make use of to that purpose is a plain one; and, if our workmen would use it, they would abridge their labour. I supposed, sir, that you would not be unwilling to hear an explanation of it.

It is composed of two jaumbs three or four feet high, arch-like, with two strings like a setting-iron, and parted by a board or shingle, which goes cross to it, and closed by a mortise in the lee-board. On the head of the jaumbs is set flat a little rolling-pin or cylinder, of an inch and an half diameter, which can turn circularly by means of a string rolled in the middle, whose two ends hanging are tied to a step, on which the workman sets his foot.

At one of the extremities of the cylinder a flat piece of iron is fastened with mastick by its center, which piece of iron is very thin, very round, and very sharp all about; it is eight inches diameter, and moves with a great swiftneſs, according as the steps are set high or low. In the mean time the workman presents the loadstone in one hand; and in the other the mud made of a very fine sand, which cools the iron, and serves to cut the stone; but because the iron, in going thro' the sand, throws it about with violence, which might blind the workman, care is taken to place just under it a little board, turned in the manner of a half circle, which receiveth it and defends the workman.

Navigation is another point that shews the address of the Chinese, we have not always seen in Europe such able and adventurous sailors as we are at present;

sent; the ancients were not so forward to venture themselves upon the seas, where one must lose the sight of land for a long time together. The danger of being mistaken in their calculation (for they had not then the use of the compass) made all pilots circumspect and wary.

There are some who pretend that the Chinese, a long time before the birth of our Saviour Christ, had sailed all the seas of India, and discovered the Cape of Good Hope: however that be, it is most certain, that from all antiquity they had always stout ships; and albeit they have not perfected the art of navigation, no more than they have done the sciences, yet did they understand much more of it than the Greeks and Romans; and at this day they sail as securely as the Portuguese.

Their vessels are like ours of all rates, but the model is not so fine; they are all flat bottom'd; the fore-castle is cut short without a stem, the stern open in the middle to the end, that the rudder, which they shut up as in a chamber, may be defended on the sides from the waves: this rudder, much longer than ours, is strongly tied to the stern-post by two cables that pass under the whole length of the vessel to the fore-part; two other such like cables hold it up, and facilitate the hoisting or lowering it, as occasion serves; the bar is as long as is necessary for the guiding it; the scamen at the helm are also assisted by ropes fastened to the larboard and starboard, and rolled upon the extremity of the bar they hold in their hand, which they fasten or slacken as they see occasion, to thrust or stop the helm.

The misen-mast is quite towards the fore-part, the main-mast is not so far from the place where we place our mizens. A cord that goes from starboard to larboard, according as the wind chops about, serves them for a stay and shrouds; the bolt-springs, which

is very weak, is at the larboard, at a considerable distance from the middle, where we are wont to place them. The round-tops they use are very short, but the main-mast is of a prodigious height and thickness; it is strongly seized, as far as the upper part of the deck, by two side beams, that strengthen it wonderfully; yea, and deprive it of playing, which we leave to ours, because it serves to give the vessel air, and to quicken its motion.

The low sails are of very thick matt, trimm'd up with laths and long poles to strengthen them, from two feet to two feet, fastened to the whole length of the masts by several little loops; they are not fastened in the middle, but have three quarters of their breadth loose, that they may be accommodated to the wind, and readily tack about as occasion serves. A great many small cords hanging at the sides of the sail, where they are placed at several distances from the sail-yard, to the bottom are gathered up, and keep tight the whole length of the matt, and further the motion when the ship's course is to be changed.

As for the okam to caulk withal, they do not use melted pitch and tar, but a composition made of lime and oil, or rather of a particular gum with flax of rasped Bambou; this matter is not subject to the accidents of fire, and the okam is so good, that the vessel seldom or never leaks; neither do they ever use the pump, a well or two serves to keep the keel dry. In your huge vessels the anchors are of iron; in the middle sort they are of an hard, heavy wood, and they only strengthen the ends; But I have observed this is not sufficient; for a spring-tide, or a fresh gale of wind, runs the ship a-drift, when it is not well anchored: and, to spare the cost of an iron anchor, they often run the risk of being cast away. As for the cables they are of flax of Coco, Canvas, or Rotin. The Rotin is a kind of long cane, which they

they make into tresses like little cords, the twists of them are usually flat, and are stronger than all the other; but because they easily snap under water when they come to touch upon any rock, they do not much use them but only upon rivers to tow against the tide.

The Chinese have in their vessels a captain as we have, but his chief business is to keep the crew in awe, and to victual them; the pilot marks out the rhumb, and places the compass. When they can discover no land, or when they do not ken it, those upon duty at the helm steer as they please: so soon as they come within ken of the coast, or enter into the port, the mariners are so vigilant, and so intent upon their duty, that they don't expect to be commanded.

You see, my lord, by what I have said, that we far surpass the Chinese at sea in the art of navigation; but it must be confessed that upon rivers and channels they have a particular skill that we are not masters of; they there manage with a few mariners huge barques, as big as our ships; and there is such a great number of them in all the southern provinces, that they always keep\* ninethousand nine hundred ninety nine ready equipped amongst those that are designed for the service of the emperor. This is the way the Chinese usually reckon; for this way of expressing themselves hath a greater emphasis in their language, and seems to denote something more, than if they should say, in one word, that there are ten thousand of them; it is a hard matter to convict them of untruth; for really there is such a prodigious number of them, that they cannot be reckoned; they are all flat bottom'd, their sails and masts are not much different from those I but just now described, but the model is not the same. The body  
of

\* K'ên L'ien, Kien pi, Kien Ché, Kien.

of the vessel, that is alike broad from prow to poop, hath two wells; upon the first, or upon the deck, they build, from one end to another, little cabins, that are raised above the sides seven or eight feet, or thereabouts; they are painted within and without, varnish'd, gilded, and all over so neat and handsome, that they are capable of making the longest voyages seem short, tho' some they take that last four or five months without intermission; for they lodge, they diet, and are always a-board these noble barques; and when a good company of Mandarines go together (which pretty often happens) there is no place where they pass the time away more delightfully. They visit one another almost every day without compliment; they play, they treat one another mutually, as if they were all of a family. This society seems so much the more acceptable to them, because it is not forced and constrained, as in other places, by the incumbrances of nice ceremonies, nor subject to suspicions that such a free correspondence would not fail to foment, if they behaved themselves so in the cities.

Notwithstanding these barques be extraordinary big, and tho' they always be either under sail, or tugg'd along by ropes, yet do they now and then make use of oars, when they are upon great rivers, or cross lakes. As for ordinary barques, they do not row them after the European manner, but they fasten a kind of a long oar to the poop, nearer one side of the barque than to the other, and sometimes another like it to the prow, that they make use of as the fish does of its tail, thrusting it out, and pulling it to them again, without ever lifting it above water. This work produces a continual rolling in the barque; but it hath this advantage, that the motion is never interrupted, whereas the time and effort that we employ to lift up our oars is lost, and signifies nothing.

The

The knack, the Chinese have to sail upon torrents, is somewhat wonderful and incredible: They in a manner force nature, and make a voyage without any dread, which other people dare not so much as look upon without being seized with some apprehension. I speak not of those cataracts they ascend by meer strength of arm, to pass from one canal to another, which in some relations are called Sluices; but of certain rivers that flow, or rather run headlong quite cross abundance of rocks, for the space of three or fourscore leagues. Had I not been upon these perillous torrents myself, I should have much ado to believe, upon another's report, what I myself have seen. It is a rashness for travellers to expose themselves, if they have been but never so little informed of it; and a kind of madness in sailors to pass their life in a trade wherein they are every moment in danger of being destroyed.

These torrents whereof I speak, which the people of the country call Chan, are met with in several places of the empire; many of them may be seen when one travels from Nancham, the capital city of Kiamsi, to Canton. The first time I went that way with father Fontaney, we were hurried away with that rapidity, that all the encavours of our mariners could not withstand it; our barque, abandoned to the tyrrant, was turned round about like a whirlegig for a long time, amongst the sinuosities and windings that the course of the water formed; and dash'd upon a rock even with the water, with that violence, that the rudder, of the thickness of a good beam, broke like a piece of glass, and the whole body of it was carried by the force of the current upon the rock, where it remained immoveable: If, instead of touching at the stern, it had hit side-ways, we had been infallibly lost; nor yet are these the most dangerous places.

In the province of Fokien, whether one comes from Canton, or Hamcheu, one is, during eight or ten days, in continual danger of perishing. The cataracts are continual, always broken by a thousand points of rocks, that scarce leave breadth enough for the passage of the barque; there are nothing but turnings and windings, nothing but cascades and contrary currents that dash one against another, and hurry the boat along like an arrow out of a bow; you are always within two feet of shelves; if you avoid one, you fall foul upon another, and from that to a third, if the pilot, by a skill not sufficiently to be admired, does not escape from shipwreck that threatens him every moment.

There are none in all the world, besides the Chinese, capable of undertaking such like voyages, or so much engaged therein, as not to be discouraged, maugre all the accidents that befall them, for there passes not a day that is not memorable for shipwrecks; and, indeed, it is a wonder that all barques do not perish. Sometimes a man is so fortunate as to split in a place not far distant from the shore, as I chanced twice to do; then indeed one escapes by swimming, provided one has strength enough to struggle out of the torrent, which is usually very strait. Other times the barques runs a-drift, and in a moment is upon the rocks, where it remains a-ground with the passengers; but, sometimes it happens, especially in some more rapid vortices, that the vessel is in pieces, and the crew buried before one has time to know where they are. Sometimes also, when one descends the cascades formed by the river, that altogether runs head-long, the boats, by falling all on a sudden, plunge into the water at the prow, without being able to rise again, and disappear in a trice. In a word, these voyages are so dangerous, that, in more than twelve thousand leagues that I have sailed upon the most tempestuous



tempestuous seas in the world, I don't believe I ever run through so many dangers for ten years, as I have done in ten days upon these torrents

The barques, they make use of, are built of a very thin, light timber, which makes it more fit to follow all the impressions one has a mind to give them. They divide them into five or six apartments, separated by good partitions; so that, when they touch at any place, upon any point of a rock, only one part of the boat is full, whilst the other remains dry, and affords time to stop the hole the water has made. For to moderate the rapidity of the motion, in places where the water is not too deep, six seamen, three on each side, hold a long spret or pole thrust to the bottom, wherewith they resist the current, yet, slackening by little and little, by the help of a small rope made fast at one end to the boat, and twined at the other round the pole, that slips but very hardly, and by a continual rubbing slackens the motion of the barque, which, without this caution, would be driven with too much rapidity, insomuch, that when the torrent is even and uniform, how rapid soever its course be, you float with the same slowness, as one does upon the calmest canal, but, when it winds in and out, this caution is to no purpose, then, indeed, they have recourse to a double rudder, made in fashion of an oar, of forty or fifty feet long, one whereof is at the prow, and the other at the poop. In the plying of these two great oars consists all the skill of the sailors, and safety of the barque, the reciprocal jerks and cunning shakes they give it, to drive it on, or to turn it right as they would have it, to fall just into the stream of the water, to shun one rock, without dashing on another, to cut a current, to pursue the fall of water, without running headlong with it, whil'st it about a thousand different ways. It is not a navigation, it

is a Murege, for there is never a managed horse that labours with more fury under the hands of a master of an academy, than these boats do in the hands of these Chinese mariners, so, that when they chauce to be cast away, it is not so much for want of skill as strength, and, whereas they carry not above eight men, if they would take fifteen, all the violence of the torrents would not be capable to carry them away. But it is a thing common enough in the world, and especially in China, rather to hazard a man's life, and run the risk to lose all he has, than to be at small charges when there is not an absolute necessity for them.

Seeing I am speaking of the art and skill of the Chinese upon rivers, I cannot forbear, my lord, letting you observe what they are masters of in matter of fishing, besides the line, nets, and the ordinary instruments we make use of in Europe, which they imploy as well as we, they have moreover two ways of catching fish, that seem to me very singular and odd. The first is practised in the night, when it is moon shine, they have two very long, slant boats, upon the sides of which they nail, from one end to the other, a board about two feet broad, upon which they have rubb'd white varnish, very smooth and shining; this plank is inclined outward, and almost toucheth the surface of the water. That it may serve their turn, it is requisite to turn it towards the moon shire, to the end that the reflection of the moon may increase its brightness, the fish playing and sporting, and mistaking the colour of the plank, for that of the water, jerk out that way, and tumble before they are aware, either upon the plank, or into the boat, so that the fisherman, almost without taking any pains, hath in a little time his small barque quite full.

The second manner of fishing is yet more pleasant. They breed, in divers provinces, cormorants, which

which they order and manage as we do dogs, or even as we do hawks for the game, one fisherman can very easily look after an hundred, he keeps them perched upon the sides of his boat, quiet, and waiting patiently for orders, till they are come at the place designed for fishing, then, at the very first signal that is given them, each takes its flight, and flies towards the way that is assigned it. 'Tis a very pleasant thing to behold how they divide amongst them the whole breadth of the river, or of the lake, they seek up and down, they dive, and come and go upon the water an hundred times, till they have spy'd their prey, then do they seize it with their beak, and immediately bring it to their master. When the fish is too big, they help one another interchangeably, one takes it by the tail, another by the head, and go after that manner in company to the boat, the men hold out long oars to them, upon which they perch themselves with their fish, and they suffer the fisherman to take the prey from them, that they may go seek for another. When they are weary, they let them rest a while, but give them nothing to eat till the fishing is over, during which time, their throat is tied with a small cord, for fear they should swallow the little fish, and, when they have filled their bellies, refuse to work longer.

I forbear speaking, my lord, of their dexterity and neatness in the manufactures of silk, earthen ware, varnish and architecture these matters have been exhausted in publick relations. It is well known, that the silks of China are not only handsome, but good and serviceable, that their porcelain is of a neatness and matter inimitable, that their varnish, and the use they make of it upon their cabinets, tables, and screens, have procured them the admiration of all Europe. As for their architecture, altho' they have therein a fancy far different

different from ours, and coming short of that perfection that we suppose ourselves arrived to: yet must it be confess'd however, that there are some pieces of sculpture in China perfectly well wrought; and the publick edifices, as gates of great cities, towers, and bridges, have something in them very noble and beautiful. In fine, the Chinese in point of arts are dexterous, laborious, curious to find out the inventions and contrivances of other nations, and very apt to imitate them. But what is peculiar to them is, that in all their works they perform, with a very few instruments and plain engines, what our artificers in *Europe* perform with an infinite number of tools.

The better to give you a character of their ingenuity, I shall add, That there is no nation under the sun, that is more fit for commerce and traffick, and understand them better: One can hardly believe how far their tricks and craftiness proceeds when they are to insinuate into mens affections to manage a fair opportunity to improve the overtures that are offered: the desire of getting torments them continually, and makes them discover a thousand ways of gaining, that would not naturally come into their head: every thing serves their turn, every thing is precious to the Chinese, because there is nothing but they know how to improve. They undertake the most difficult voyages, for the least hopes of gain, and that's the reason why all things are in motion; in the streets, upon the roads, upon the rivers, and all along the coasts of the maritime towns, you shall see a world of travellers: the trade and commerce, that is, carried on every where, is the soul of the people, and the *primum mobile* of all their actions.

If they would accompany labour and natural industry with a little more honesty, especially in respect of strangers, nothing could be wanting to them

them that might contribute to make them able, complete merchants; but their essential quality is to deceive and couse when it lies in their power; some of them do not conceal it, but boast of it: I have heard of some so brazen fac'd, that when they have been taken in the fact, to excuse themselves by their simplicity, said, *You see that I don't understand trap; you know more of it than I, but perhaps I shall be more lucky, or more subtle another time.* They falsify almost every thing they vend, when things are in a condition to be falsified. They say particularly, that they counterfeit gammons of bacon so artificially, that many times a man is mistaken in them; and, when they have boiled them a long time, they find nothing, when they come to eat them, but a large piece of wood under a hog's-skin. It is certain, a stranger will be always cheated, if he buy alone, let him take what care he will; he should employ a trusty Chinese, who is acquainted with the country, who knows all the tricks; and, indeed you will be very happy, if he that buys, and he that sells, do not collogue together to your cost, and go snips in the profit.

When one lends them any thing he must have sureties, for, as for their word, those who know them cannot rely upon it. Some of them have been observed to borrow a very small sum, promising to restore the principal with vast interest, which they punctually perform'd upon the day appointed, to gain themselves the reputation of down-right honest men. After that, they demanded a greater sum, which they repaid also without failing. At length, they continued this commerce whole years together, till such time as engaging to credit them, and lend them considerable sums, they carried their money far enough off, and disappeared for ever.

When they would obtain a favour, they do not discover themselves all on the sudden, there are some who prepare for it whole years before-hand. They make presents to the master, and to all those of the household, they seem so much the more disinterested, and to have no design, because they refuse all returns but when one has accepted their toys, which they thought they might do, without fearing any bad consequence, then they begin to shew their design, when they have so well play'd their game, that they cannot in reason receive a repulse for what they demand

This subtlety of deceiving is still more extraordinary in thieves and robbers. They break thro' the thickest walls, burn gates, and make great holes in them by the help of a certain engine, which fires the wood without any flame. They penetrate into the most private recesses, without ever being perceived, and, when people awake in the morning, they are amaz'd to find their bed without curtains and coverlets, their chamber unfurnish'd, tables, cabinets, coffers, and plate, all is march'd off, without so much sometimes as perceiving any foot-steps of the thieves, but the hole in the wall at which they went out with all the moveables of the house.

When they are apprehended, if they be armed, they suffer death, but if, when taken, they are found in no condition to wound or kill any body, they inflict some other corporal punishment, according to the quality of the goods so stolen; but, if they have taken nothing, the judges are satisfy'd by punishing them with thirty or forty blows with a cudgel. They say, these felons have a certain drug, the fume of which ext<sup>r</sup>enally stupifies, and casts into a deep sleep, which affords them time and opportunity to do their job, and they  
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are so persuaded of that truth, that travellers cause a basin of cold water to be brought into their chamber in the inn, which is a sure remedy to frustrate the power or charm of the fume.

Not but after all one may meet with honesty and fair dealing amongst the Chinese, for (not to speak of christians, in whom religion hath reformed the evil inclinations of nature) I do remember, that, at my first arrival into China with my companions, strangers, unknown, exposed to the avarice of the Mandarines, not one of them did us the least wrong, and, what appeared yet more extraordinary was, that offering a present to a commissioner of the custom house, people that are usually greedy, and attentive to the improvement of such sort of occasions, he protested, notwithstanding all our earnest intreaties, that he would never take any thing of any body so long as he was in his office, but, if one day he should chance to be in another condition, he would with all his heart receive from us some European curiosity. After all, these are rare examples, nor must you from them take the character of the natives.

As the Chinese have a genius for commerce, so have they likewise for affairs of state, their wit has been a long time adapted to politics, and negotiating affairs, not with foreigners, whom they look upon as Barbarians, and their subjects, whom the ancient haughtiness of the empire forbids to correspond with, but amongst themselves, according as they are bound by interest, or as their fortune engages them therein. There is policy amongst princes, and other grandees of the realm, as much as in any court of Europe, they continually apply themselves to know the gusto, inclinations, humours, and designs of one another, and they study it so much the more, as they are more

reserved, and, dissembling themselves, they keep a fair correspondence with every body, nay, and even observe a decorum with their enemies.

As the way of challenging to duel is not allowed in the state, all their revenge is cunning and secret; one cannot imagine by how many shifts and contrivances they endeavour to destroy one another, without making any show of having any such thing in their head. They are not only dissemblers, but patient, even to insensibleness, in expecting a favourable moment to declare themselves, and to strike home. But as they observe all sorts of measures with their enemies, the better to lull them asleep, so they sometimes huff their best friends, for fear, lest a too strict bond of friendship should engage them together in some unlucky adventure. So far are they from that barbarous friendship that inclines us in Europe to engage those in our private quarrels that are most devoted to us, and to expose, without any advantage, a life that we should defend, even by the loss of our own.

The lords of the court, the viceroys of provinces, and generals of armies, are in perpetual motion, to preserve or acquire the principal places of state; they carry on their business by money, favour, and by intrigue: and since the laws give nothing, either to solicitation, riches, or ambition of private persons, but solely to merit, the most subtle seem always most moderate, whilst, in the mean time, by an hundred hidden springs, they endeavour to obtain the choice and esteem of the emperor.

In short, if some neighbours more potent and intelligent than the Tartars, had ever been able to have accustomed them to make treaties, as the different people of Europe do amongst themselves, I am persuaded, that policy and negotiation would have



have proved more powerful to defend them from their enemies, than that prodigious wall, of which they endeavoured to make a bulwark, and all those numerous armies wherewith they have hitherto, but all in vain, opposed them

After all that I have said, I leave you to judge, my lord, of the character of these people, and of the value that ought to be put upon them, when a man hath a gust as good as yours, he does not only think of things nicely, but also judges of them solidly, and with the greatest exactness, so that I suppose, nobody will take it ill that I submit the Chinese to your censure. They only would find some difficulty to subscribe to it, if they understood the defect of their wit and genius, as much as we understand the delicateness of yours, but, as they believe themselves the most sensible nation in the world, I am sure they will be glad to be left to the judgment of a person, whom all France begins to admire, and, what is more, whom Lewis the Great honours particularly with his esteem. You will observe, my lord, in China, some faults which one cannot excuse, all the favour I beg of you for them is, to reflect, that formerly they have been wiser, more sincere, and honest less corrupted than they are at present. Virtue, which they cultivated with so much care, which contributed infinitely to model their reason, made them at that time the wisest people of the universe and, being their manners were more regular, so, I doubt not, but they were then more intelligent, and more rational.

However, in the very condition wherein they are at present, you will, perhaps, esteem them not withstanding, and find withal, that tho' they have not ingenuity enough to be compared with our learned and knowing men in Europe, yet do they

not give place to us in arts; that they equal us in politeness, and that, perhaps, they may surpass us in politicks and in government. I am, with the most profound respect,

*My Lord,*

*Your most humble,*

*st obedient Servant,*

L. J.





THE  
Present State  
OF  
C H I N A.

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P A R T II.

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L E T T E R IX.

*To the Cardinal D'Estrees.*

*Of the Policy and Government of the Chinese.*

**W**HEN I had the honour to give your eminence an account of the present state of China, I did a long time doubt whether or no I should venture to describe to you their form of government: To handle so nice a subject requires the abilities of the most exact politician, and a knowledge of state-affairs exquisite as yours; a subject not to be managed by any without pains and trouble, but which lies too deep for those of my character whose knowledge in the affairs of this world is slight and superficial.

But yet it would be the grèatest of injuries to the Chinese, to pass that over in silence, which they look upon as the thing to which they owe all their good qualities, and which they esteem as a master-piece of the most exact policy; thus therefore, my lord, tho' I should own it a piece of imprudence in me to meddle with these mysterious arcana of government, and to search never so little into the depths of worldly wisdom; I could be content to be blamed for it in Europe, if China, to whom I own I bear a kindness and respect, approve of it in me, and get any credit thereby.

Amongst the several models and plans of government which the ancients framed, we shall perhaps meet with none so perfect and exact as is that of the Chinese monarchy. The ancient lawgivers of this potent empire formed it in their days very little different from what it is in ours. Other states, according to the common fate of the things of this world, are sensible of the weakness of infancy, are born misshapen and imperfect; and, like men, they owe their perfection and maturity to time. China seems more exempted from the common laws of nature; and, as though God himself had founded their empire, the plan of their government was not a whit less perfect in its cradle, than it is now after the experience and trial of four thousand years.

During all which time the Chinese had never so much as heard of the name of republick; and when lately, on the Hollanders arrival, they heard of it, it seemed so strange to them that they have scarcely yet done admiring at it. Nothing could make them understand how a state could regularly be governed without a king; they looked upon a republick to be a monster with many heads, formed by the ambition, headiness, and corrupt inclination of men in times of publick disorder and confusion.

As they bear an aversion to republican government, so are they yet more set against tyranny and oppression, which they say proceeds not from the absoluteness of the prince's power, for they cannot be too much their subjects masters, but from the prince's own wildness, which neither the voice of nature, nor the laws of God can ever countenance. The Chinese are of opinion, that the obligation, which is laid on their kings not to abuse their power, is rather a means to confirm and establish them, than to occasion their ruin, and that this useful constraint, which they themselves lay on their passions, does no more diminish their power or authority here on earth, than the like constraint derogates from the majesty and power of the Almighty, who is not the less powerful because he cannot do evil.

An unbounded authority which the laws give the emperor, and a necessity which the same laws lay upon him to use that authority with moderation and discretion, are the two props which have for so many ages supported this great fabrick of the Chinese monarchy. The first principle thereof, that is instilled into the people, is to respect their prince with so high a veneration as almost to adore him. They stile him the Son of Heaven, and the only Master of the World. His commands are indisputable, his words carry no less authority with them, than if they were oracles, in short, every thing that comes from him is sacred. He is seldom seen, and never spoken to but on the knees. The grandees of the court, the princes of the blood, nay, his own brothers bow to the ground, not only when he is present, but even before his throne, and there are set days every week or month, in which the nobility assemble, who meet in one of the courts of the palace to acknowledge the authority of their prince by their most submissive adorations, tho' he perhaps be not there in person.

When he is ill, especially if dangerously, the palace is full of Mandarines of every order, who spend night and day in a large court, in habits proper for the occasion, to express their own grief, and to ask of Heaven their prince's cure. Rain, snow, cold, or any other inconveniences excuse them not from the performance of this duty; and, as long as the emperor is in pain or in danger, any one that saw the people would think that they fear nothing but the loss of him.

Besides, interest is no small occasion of the great respect which is shewn him by his subjects; for, as soon as he is proclaimed emperor, the whole authority of the empire is in his hands, and the good or ill fortune of his subjects is owing wholly to him.

First, all places in the empire are in his disposal, he bestows them on whom he thinks fit; and, besides, he is to be look'd upon as the disposer of them the more, because none of them are ever sold. Merit, that is, honesty, learning, long experience, and especially a grave and sober behaviour, is the only thing considered in the candidates, and no other considerations can lay any claim to favour. Neither is this all, that he hath the choice of all officers of state; but, if he dislikes their management when chosen, he dismisses or changes them without more ado. A peccadillo has hertofore been thought enough to render a Mandarin incapable of continuing in his place; and I am told that a governor of one of their cities was turned out, because on a day of audience his cloaths were thought too gay to become the gravity of his office; the emperor thinking a person of that humour not fit to fill such a place, or to act as a magistrate who represents his prince.

I myself saw at Peking an example of this sovereign power, at which I was the more surprized because it was brought about with so little disturbance.

It was discovered that three Colaos (who are Mandarines as honourable for their places amongst the Chinese, as our ministers of state are amongst us) had taken money under hand for some services done by them in the execution of their office. The emperor, who was informed of it, took away their salaries immediately, and ordered them without farther trouble to retire. What became of the two first, or how they were used, I cannot tell, but the other, who had a great while been a magistrate, and was as much esteemed for his understanding as he was respected for his age, was condemned to look after one of the palace gates amongst other common soldiers, in whose company he was listed.

I saw him myself one day in this mean condition, he was upon duty as a common centinel; when I passed by him, I bowed to him, as indeed every one else did, for the Chinese <sup>very much</sup> respected in him the slender remains of that honour which he had just before possessed.

I must confess, I soon left wondering at so severe a punishment inflicted on so great a man, when I saw after what manner even the princes of the blood themselves were used. One of them was a mighty lover of sports, especially of cock fighting (which is an usual diversion in the East, and the obstinacy of those creatures, which, armed with gavelocks, fight till they die with an incredible skill and courage, is very surprising). The emperor did not think it amiss that this prince should spend a few hours in such sort of diversions. He knew that great men have spare time as well as others, and that it does not derogate from any man's character ~~to spend~~ away an hour or two sometimes in those diversions which are more suitable to young people, and that it is not at all improper for men of understanding and gravity to condescend to mean  
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and ordinary sports, in order to give some relaxation and ease to their weary spirits. Nevertheless, he could not bear to see him spend his whole time in things so much below his quality, and so unbecoming his years, he therefore told him of it; but, finding that this admonition did not work with him, the emperor resolved to make an example of him, and did therefore declare, that he had forfeited his title and honour of Prince; he was, besides, deprived of his retinue, his salary, and his quality, until he should, by some great and extraordinary action, make it appear to the whole kingdom, that he was not unworthy of the blood from whence he sprang.

The emperor went yet a step farther, for perceiving that the number of the princes of the blood was very great, and that the ill conduct of many of them might in time bring their quality into contempt; he published an order, that none should hereafter bear that character, without his express leave, which he gave to none, but to those, who, by their virtue, understanding, and diligence in their offices, did very well deserve it.

Such administrations in Europe would cause heart-burnings and factions in the states; but in China they are brought about without any the least disturbance, these changes create no manner of trouble if they are done for the publick good, and not from a personal hatred or violent passion; however, if the emperor should be so far transported as to act thus to satisfy his own passion, yet, if his government be generally equitable and just, such particular ill administrations raise no faction in his subjects against him.

You will have a plain proof of the abridgement of the emperor's power, from a passage which happened in a late war with one of the kings of Tartary. The emperor sent a mighty army under his brother's



brother's command, to <sup>o</sup>punish the vanity and rashness of that puny king, who had dared to make inroads into the countries of several of the allies of the empire. The Tartar, whose warlike troops fought only an opportunity of signalizing themselves, advanced to engage the imperial army, and set upon them with so much violence and vigour, that at last, notwithstanding he was so much inferior to them in number, he beat them from their ground, and forced them to retreat in disorder.

The emperor's father-in-law, an old Tartar, well vers'd in the trade of war, commanded the artillery, and plaid his part so well that he was killed at the head of a few, yet brave soldiers, whom he encouraged as well by his example as by his words; but the general was accused of flying first, and drawing by his flight the rest of the army after him. The emperor, who is himself a man of courage, and an admirer of glory, was less troubled at the loss of the battle, than he was at that of his brother's honour. He sent for him immediately to court, to be tried before a council of the blood, whom he assembled in his palace.

The prince, who was on all other accounts a person of singular merit, surrendered himself with the same humility and submission, as he could have done, had he been the meanest officer in the army, and, without staying till sentence was pronounc'd, he condemn'd himself, and own'd that he deserved death. *You deserve it,* said the emperor, *but you ought to recover your lost honour, to seek your death in the midst of the enemies troops, and not here amongst us in the midst of Peking, where it can only increase your disgrace.* At last the emperor was inclinable to pardon him; but the princes, who thought themselves in some measure disgraced by this action, earnestly begged of the emperor to use the utmost of his power to punish him; and his uncle, who assisted at the council,

cil treated him with so much scorn and contempt, that amongst us such usage would afflict any gentleman so sensibly as to go near to break his heart.

The emperor, who has power over the lives of the princes of the blood, can certainly dispose of his other subjects: The laws make him so far master of their lives, that neither viceroy, nor parliaments, nor any other sovereign court throughout the whole empire, can execute any criminal without express order from court. They are arraigned and tried up and down in the several provinces, but the sentence is always presented to the emperor, who either confirms it or rejects it as he pleases; most an end he agrees to it, but he very often cuts off part of the sentence, and makes it less rigorous.

Secondly, altho' every one be perfect master of his estate, and enjoys his lands free from disturbance and molestation: the emperor can nevertheless lay what taxes he thinks fit upon his subjects to supply the pressing wants, and relieve the necessities of the state. This power indeed he seldom makes use of, whether it be, that the standing revenue and ordinary taxes are sufficient to maintain a war abroad, or, whether it be, that in a civil war they are unwilling to run the hazard of provoking their subjects too much, by laying too great a load on them. They have likewise a custom of exempting every year one or two provinces from bearing their proportion of the tax, especially if any of them have suffered thro' the sickness of the people, or, if the lands, thro' unseasonable weather, have not yielded so good an increase as usual.

It is true, that the subsidies, which the law grants, are so considerable, that, were the Chinese less industrious, or their lands less fruitful, this empire like the rest of the Indian kingdoms, would be only a society of poor and miserable wretches. It is this prodigious income that makes the prince so powerful,

powerful, and that enables him, at an hour's warning, to raise a potent and a numerous army to keep his people in obedience

It is very difficult to reckon what the revenue of this empire amounts to, because, besides the money that is raised in specie, vast sums are paid in in goods After the best examination which I could get both from the officers, and from their books, I believe the treasury receives in money about 22,000,000 of Chinese crowns, which the Portuguese call Taels, each of which in our money comes to about six shillings But the rice, corn, salt, silks, cloaths, varnish, and a hundred other commodities which they pay in, together with the customs and forfeited estates, amount to more than 50,000,000 of the Chinese crowns So that, after having allow'd for the goods received into the treasury, their value in silver, and having made the nearest and most exact calculation possible, I find the ordinary revenues of the emperor to amount in our money to 21,600,000 / at least

Thirdly, the right of making peace and war is the emperor's, he may make treaties on what conditions he pleases, provided they be not such as are dishonourable to the kingdom As for the judgments which he himself passes, they are irrevocable, and, to have them put in execution, he need only send them to his sovereign courts or viceroys, who dare not in the least delay registering and publishing them When, on the other hand, the sentences, pronounced by their parliaments or other magistrates, are no ways obligatory till approved and confirmed by the emperor

Fourthly, another instance of his supreme authority is this, that he has the liberty of making choice of his successor, which he may not only chuse from the royal family, but from amongst his other subjects This ancient right hath been heretofore put in practice with so much impartiality and wisdom, as

would be admirable even in a prince who to his other titles hath that of Most Christian. For some of these emperors, finding none of their family, tho' numerous, able to support the weight of a crown, chuse for their successors persons mean as to their birth and fortunes, but eminent for their virtue, and admirable for their understanding; saying that they acted thus not only from a desire of their kingdoms good, but also out of respect to the honour and credit of their own children, for whom it would be more glorious to live privately, than to sit upon a throne exposed to the censure, and oftentimes to the curses of all their people. *If, said they, a lofty title could create merit in those who had it not before, we should indeed injure our children in excluding them from the crown. But since it serves only to publish and spread their defects more abroad, we think ourselves obliged, by the kindness and tenderness which we bear to them, to keep them from that shame and disgrace which a crown would necessarily expose them to*

However, examples of this nature have been very seldom known, for the emperors, for many ages, have bounded their choice within the compass of their own families, yet they do not always chuse the eldest. He, who now reigns with so much wisdom, was a younger brother, and sees his elder brother as dutiful, and free from ambition as the meanest of his subjects. The great number of princes of the blood is with us in Europe as great an occasion of fears and jealousies; but in China it is quite otherwise, for, at the death of the last emperor of China, there were above ten thousand princes up and down the several provinces, yet was there no confusion or disorder in the least, which could certainly proceed from nothing but the excessive authority of this emperor, who finds as little trouble in China in governing a multitude of princes, as other princes do in governing the common people.

Further

Furthermore, the emperor, after he has made choice of, and publickly owned who shall be his successor, may afterwards exclude him, and renew his choice, but not unless he have very good reason for doing so, nor unless the sovereign courts of Pekin do in a manner give their consent to it, for if he act thus, without observing these methods, it would not only raise the people's tongues, but perhaps their hands against him.

Fifthly, the grave itself cannot put an end to his power over his subjects, which is exercised even over the dead, whom he either disgraces or honours (as much as if they were alive) when he hath a mind either to reward or punish themselves or their families. He makes some after their decease dukes, others counts, and confers upon them several other titles, which our language knows no name for. He may canonize them as saints, or, as they speak, may make them naked spirits. Sometimes he builds them temples, and if their ministry hath been very beneficial, or their virtues very eminent, he commands the people to honour them as gods. Paganism hath for many ages authorised and countenanced this abuse of religion, yet this reparation religion has from the empire of China for the forementioned injury, that, ever since the foundation of this empire, the emperor has been always looked upon as the chief priest and principal servant of religion, for there are some ceremonies, and publick sacrifices, which he alone is thought worthy to offer up to the great Creator of heaven.

Sixthly, there is another instance, which, tho' of less importance than the preceding, yet may serve as well as them to shew how unlimited the authority of this emperor is. It is this, the emperor hath power to change the figure and character of their letters, to abolish any characters already received, or to form any new one. He may likewise change

the names of provinces, of cities, of families: he may likewise forbid the using of any expression or manner of speaking, he may forbid the use of some expressions which are generally received, and may bring into use and practice those ways of speaking which have been looked upon as obsolete and uncouth, and this either in common discourse or in writing. So that custom which exercises so unalterable an authority over the signification of words, that the Greek and Roman powers were too little to subdue it, and which for that reason hath by some been called a fantastical and an unjust tyrant, equally commanding both princes and common people; this custom, I say, of which even in Europe we complain so much, is submissive and humble in China, and is content to alter and give way when the emperor commands.

One would imagine that this unlimited power should often occasion very unfortunate events in the government, and indeed it sometimes hath, as nothing in this world is without its alloy of inconvenience. Yet so many are the provisions, and so wise the precautions which the laws have prescribed to prevent them, that a prince must be wholly insensible of his own reputation, and even interest, as well as of the publick good, who continues long in the abuse of his authority.

For, if he hath any regard for his reputation, there are three things which will prevail with him to govern by justice and not passion. First, the old lawgivers have from the first foundation of the government made this a standing maxim, that kings are properly the fathers of their people, and not masters; placed in the throne only to be served by their subjects. Wherefore it is that in all ages their emperor is called Grand-father, and, of all his titles of honour, there is none which he likes to be called by so well as this.

This idea of their prince is so deeply imprinted in the minds of his people, and of his Mandarines, that, when they make any panegyrick in the praise of their emperor, it is upon the topick of his affection to his people. Their teachers and their philosophers constantly set forth in their books, that the state is but a large family, and that he, who knows how to govern the one, is the best capable of ruling the other, so that, if the prince neglects never so little the practice of this maxim, he may be a good warrior, an able politician, a learned prince, and yet meet with little or no esteem from his people. They do not form their character of their prince from these or such like qualities, his reputation increases or diminishes with them, in proportion, as he is or is not a father to them.

Secondly, every Mandarin may tell the emperor of his faults, provided it be in such a submissive manner, as is agreeable to that veneration and profound respect which is due to him, the manner they usually take to bring it about is this. The Mandarin, who perceives any thing in the emperor's management disagreeable to their constitution or laws, draws up a request, in which, after having set forth the respect, which he bears towards his imperial majesty, he most humbly prays his prince that he will please to reflect upon the ancient laws and good example of those holy princes his predecessors afterwards he takes notice wherein he apprehends, that his prince hath deviated from them.

This request lies upon a table, among many other petitions which are daily presented, and which the emperor is obliged to read. If he does not hereupon change his conduct, he is put in mind of it again, as often as the Mandarin hath zeal and courage to do so, for they had need of a great deal of both who do venture thus to expose themselves to their prince's indignation.

A little before I arrived at Peking, one who had an office in that court, which is appointed for the inspection into the mathematicks, had the courage to advise the emperor in the aforesaid manner, <sup>and</sup> once naming the education of the prince his son, setting forth, that, instead of breeding him up to learning and knowledge, his tutors made it their whole care and endeavour to make him expert in the business of war, to shoot with the bow, and to manage his arms. Another let the emperor know, that he went too often from his palace and, that contrary to the customs of the ancient kings, he made too long stays in Tartary. This prince, who was one of the most haughty, as well as the most politick governors that ever sat in the throne, seemed to pay some deference and respect to their advice. Nevertheless, since these his journies into Tartary contributed much to the preserving his health, the princes of his household begged of him to regard that more than the idle whimsies of particular men.

As for the mathematician who had troubled himself with what did not belong to him, the education of the prince, he was turned out of his office, and the rest of his fellow officers, tho' they had no hand in the business, were deprived of a year's salary. This method hath been practised for a long time in China, and their histories take notice, that no means has been found so powerful as this to oblige their emperors, when they act amiss, to return to their duty; altho' this means proves often dangerous to those particular persons who make use of it.

Thirdly, if their princes have any regard for their reputation, the manner, in which their histories are written, is alone sufficient to keep them within bounds. A certain number of men, who for their learning and impartiality are purposely chosen for this affair, remark, with all the exactness possible, not only all their prince's actions, but also his words; each of these



these persons by himself, and without communication with the others, as things fall out, sets them down in a loose paper, and puts these papers thro' a chink into an office set apart for this purpose. In these papers both the emperor's virtues and faults are set down with the same liberty and impartiality. Such a day, say they, *the prince's behaviour was unseasonable and intemperate, he spoke after a manner which did not become his dignity. The punishment which he inflicted on such an officer was rather the effect of his passion, than the result of his justice. In such an affair he stopp'd the sword of justice, and partially abrogated the sentence passed by the magistrates. Or else, He enter'd courageously into a war for the defence of his people, and for the maintenance of the honour of his kingdom. At such a time he made an honourable peace. He gave such and such marks of his love to his people. Notwithstanding the commendations given him by his flatterers, he was not puffed up, but behaved himself modestly, his words were tempered with all the sweetness and humility possible, which made him more loved and admired by his court than ever.* And in this manner they set down every thing that occurs in his administration.

But that neither fear on the one side, nor hope on the other, may bias these men to a partiality in the account they give of their prince, this office is never opened during that prince's life, or while any of his family sit on the throne. When the crown goes in another line, which often happens, all these loose memoirs are gathered together, and, after they have compared them, to come to the more certain knowledge of the truth, they from them compose the history of that emperor, to propose him as an example to posterity, if he have acted wisely, or to expose him to the common censure and odium of the people, if he have been negligent of his own duty and his people's good. When a prince loves honour and glory, and sees that it is not in the power

of flattery and imposture to persuade the people to give it him, he will then be circumspect and cautious how he behaves himself during the whole reign.

Interest, which has a far greater commend over some tempers than the love of reputation, is as great a motive to the emperor to be guided by the ancient customs, and to adhere to the laws. They are so wholly made for his advantage; that he cannot violate them without doing some prejudice to his own authority; nor can he make new and unusual laws, without exposing his kingdom to the danger of change and confusion. Not that the grandees of his court, or his parliaments, how zealously soever they may seem to assert their ancient customs, are easily provoked to a revolt, or to make use of their prince's government, as an occasion to diminish his authority. Altho' there are some examples of this in history, yet they seldom occur, and, whenever they do, it is under such circumstances as seem to go a great way towards their justification.

But such is the temper of the Chinese, that when their emperor is full of violence and passion, or very negligent of his charge, the same spirit of perverseness possesses also his subjects. Every Mandarin thinks himself the sovereign of his province or city, when he does not perceive it taken care of by a superior power. The chief ministers sell places to those who are unfit to fill them. The viceroys become so many little tyrants. The governors observe no more the rules of justice. The people by these means oppressed and trampled under foot, and by consequence miserable, are easily furred up to sedition. Rogues multiply and commit insolences in companies, and in a country, where the people are almost innumerable, numerous armies do, in an instant get together, who wait for nothing but an opportunity, under specious pretences, to disturb the publick peace and quiet,

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those things which come under the notice of that court; the rest are under offices, and consist of a president and several counsellors, all of which are subject to the president of the principal office, from whom there is no appeal.

But because it is the emperor's interest to keep such considerable bodies as these so far under, as that it may not lie in their power to weaken the emperor's authority, or to enterprize any thing against the state; care is taken, that tho' each of these six courts have their particular charges of which they are constituted sole judges, yet no considerable thing can be brought to perfection and maturity without the joint help and mutual concurrence of all these courts. I explain myself by the instance of war: the number of the troops, the quality of their officers, the march of their armies, are provided for by the fourth court, but the money to pay them must be had from the second; so that scarce any one thing of consequence to the state can be promoted without the inspection of many, and oftentimes of all the Mandarines.

The second means used by the emperor, for this purpose, is to place an officer in each of these courts, who has an eye to all their proceedings. He is not, it's true, of the council, yet he is present at all their assemblies, and informed of all their proceedings, we may call this officer an Inspector. He either privately advertises the emperor, or else openly accuses the Mandarines of the faults which they commit in their private capacities, as well as of those which they commit in the execution of their office. He observes their actions, their behaviour, and even their words, so that nothing escapes his notice. I am told, that he, who once undertakes this employ, can never quit it for any other, that so the hopes of a better preferment may never tempt him to be partial to any one, nor the fear of losing his place frighten him from accusing those who misbehave themselves. Of these  
officers

officers, whom they call *Colis*, even the princes of the blood stand in awe, and I remember that one of the greatest of the nobility, having built a house somewhat higher than the custom of China suffers, did of himself pull it down in a few days, when he had heard that one of these inspectors talked of accusing him.

As for the provinces, they are under the immediate inspection of two sorts of viceroys. One sort has the government of one province only. Thus there is one viceroy at Peking, at Canton, or at Nankin, or in any other town but a little distant from the chief city of the province. Besides this, these provinces are under the government of other viceroys, who are called *Tsounto*, and have under their jurisdiction two, or three, nay sometimes four provinces. There is no prince in Europe whose dominions are of so large extent as is the jurisdiction of these general officers, yet, how great soever their authority may seem to be, they do in no wise diminish that of the particular viceroys, and each of these two viceroys have their particular right so well settled and adjusted, that they never clash or contend with each other in their administrations.

These have all of them in their several lordships many courts, of the same nature with those at Peking already described, but are subordinate to them, so that from these they appeal to them. There are besides these several other inferior offices for the preparing business, or for finishing it according to the extent of their commissions. There are three sorts of towns, each of which have their particular governor, and a great number of Mandarines who administer justice; amongst which cities there is this difference, that those of the third sort or rank are subordinate to those of the second, as those of the second are to them of the first, these of the first rank are subject to the jurisdiction of the general officers of the capital cities, according as the nature of things requires, and all the

the judges, be their quality what it will in the civil government, have their dependence on the viceroy, in whom resides the imperial authority. He, from time to time, convenes the principal Mandarines of his province, to take cognisance of the good or bad qualities of the governors, lieutenants, and even inferior officers: he sends private dispatches to court to inform the emperor who misbehave themselves, who are either therefore deprived of their offices, or else cited to appear and offer what they have to say in their justification.

On the other hand, the viceroy's power is counterpoised by that of the great Mandarines, who are about him, and who may accuse him when they are satisfied that it is necessary for the publick good. But that which principally keeps him upon his guard is, that the people, when evil intreated or oppressed by him, may petition the emperor in person for his removal, and that another may be ordered them. The least insurrection or disturbance is laid at his door, which, if it continues three days, he must answer for at his peril. It is his fault, say the laws, if disturbances spring up in his family, that is, in the province over which he has the charge. He ought to regulate the conduct of the Mandarines under him, that so the people may not suffer by their ill management. When people like their masters, they do not desire to change them; and when the yoke is easy, it is a pleasure to bear it.

But because private persons cannot easily come at the court, and because the just complaints of his people cannot always reach the ears of their prince, (especially in China where the governors easily corrupt with bribes the general officers, and they the supreme courts;) the emperor disperses up and down secret spies, persons of known wisdom and reputation; these in every province, by their cunning management, inform themselves from the countrymen, tradesmen

tradesmen, or others, after what manner the Mandarines behave themselves in the execution of their offices. When from their private, but certain informations, or rather when by the publick voice, which seldom imposes on us, they are acquainted with any disorder, then they publicly own their commission from the emperor, they take up those criminal Mandarines, and manage the cause against them. This heretofore kept all the judges to their duty, but, since the Tartars have been masters of China, these officers have been laid aside, inasmuch as some of them abused their commission, enriching themselves by taking money of the guilty to conceal their faults, and of the innocent, whom they threatened to accuse as criminal. Nevertheless, that so useful a means of keeping the magistrates to their duty may not be wholly lost, the emperor himself, who has a tender love for his subjects, hath thought it his duty to visit in person each province, and to hear himself the complaints of his people, which he performs with such a diligence as makes him the terror of his Mandarines, and the delight of his people. Amongst the great variety of accidents which have happened to him during those his progresses, they report, that, being once separated from his attendants, he saw an old man weeping bitterly, of whom he inquired, what was the occasion of his tears. Sir, said the old man, who did not know to whom he spoke, I had but one son, who was the comfort of my life, and on whom lay the whole care of my family, a Mandarine of Tartary has deprived me of him, which hath made me helpless at present, and will make me so as long as I live, for how can I, who am so poor and friendless, oblige so great a man as he, to make me restitution? That's not so difficult as you imagine, said the emperor, get up behind me, and direct me to his house, who has done you this wrong. The good man complied without any ceremony,

mony, and in two hours time they both got to the Mandarin's house, who little expected, so extraordinary a visit. In the interim the guards, and a great company of lords, after a great deal of search made, came thither; some of which attended without, others entered with the emperor, not knowing what the business was which brought him there. Where the emperor, having convicted the Mandarin of the violence of which he was accused, condemn'd him on the spot to death; afterwards turning round to the afflicted father who had lost his son: To make you a good recompence for your loss, says he, after a grave and serious manner, I give you the office of the criminal who is just now dead; but take care to execute it with equity, and let his punishment, as well as his crime, prove for your advantage, for fear lest you in your turn are made an example to others.

They have still a farther means to oblige the viceroy, and other governors, to a strict care of their charge, which expedient I do not believe any government or kingdom, tho' never so severe, did ever yet make use of. It is this, every governor is obliged from time to time, with all humility and sincerity, to own and acknowledge the secret or public faults committed by himself in his administration, and to send the account in writing up to court. This is a more troublesome business to comply with, than one readily imagines, for on one side it is an uneasy thing to accuse ourselves of those things which we know will be punished by the emperor, tho' mildly. On the other side, it is more dangerous to dissemble them; for, if by chance they are accused of them in the inspector's advertisement, the least fault, which the Mandarin shall have concealed, will be big enough to turn him out of his ministry. So that the best way is to make a sincere confession of one's faults, and to purchase a pardon for them by money, which in China has the virtue of blotting out all

crimes, which remedy notwithstanding is no small punishment for a Chinese, the fear of such a punishment makes him oftentimes exceeding circumspect and careful, and sometimes even virtuous against his own inclinations.

After these provisions, which the laws make, as I have said, they give the following directions how to proceed in the business of punishing criminals. There is no need of having a warrant to carry them before the magistrate, nor that the magistrate should sit in a court of justice to hear the accusation and plea of the criminal. Such formalities as these are not insisted on there. Wherever the magistrate sees a fault, there he has power to punish it on the spot, be it in the street, in the highway, or in a private house, it is all one, he may take up a gamester, a rook, or a debauchee, and without more formalities he orders some of his attendants to give him twenty or thirty stripes - after which, as tho' nothing extraordinary had happened, he goes on his journey without any concernment. Notwithstanding this punishment, the person damaged may accuse the same criminal again in a superior court, where he is tried, the result of which is usually a farther punishment.

Farther, the plaintiff may in common cases bring his action in any higher magistrate's court, even before it has been pleaded in an inferior court. I mean, an inhabitant of a town of the *imperial* rank may forthwith apply himself to the governor of the capital city of the province, or even to the viceroy, without having it examined before the governor of his own town, and, when it once comes before a superior judge, the inferior ones may not take cognisance of it, unless it be deputed to them by those superior judges, as it often is. When the cause is of great consequence, there lies an appeal from the viceroy to one of the supreme courts at Peking, according to the nature of the affair, where the cause is examined in



one of the under offices, who make their report to the president of the supreme office, who gives sentence after he has advised with his assistants, and communicated his opinion to the Colao, who carry it to the emperor. Sometimes the emperor desires better information, sometimes gives sentence on the spot, and in his name the supreme court makes a brief of the sentence, and sends it to the viceroys for them to put it in execution. A sentence pronounced in this manner is irrevocable, they call it the Holy Commandment; that is to say, the commandment, which is without defect or partiality.

You will think it doubtless an inconceivable thing, that a prince should have time to examine himself the affairs of so vast an empire as is that of China. But besides that wars and foreign negotiations never spend his time, which in Europe is almost the sole business of the councils; besides this, I say, their affairs are so well digested and ordered, that he can with half an eye see to which party he ought to incline in his sentence, and this because their laws are so plain, that they leave no room for intricacy or dispute. So that two hours a day is time enough for that prince to govern himself an empire of that extent, that were there other laws, might find employment for thirty kings; so true it is, that the laws of China, are wise, plain, well understood, and exactly adequate to the particular genius and temper of that nation.

To give your eminence a general notion of this, I shall think it sufficient to remark to you three things, which are exceeding conducive to the publick peace, and are as it were the very soul of the government. The first is the moral principles which are instilled into the people. The second is the political rules which are set up in every thing. The third is the maxims of good policy which are, or ought to be every where observed.

The first moral principle respects private families, and enjoins children such a love, obedience, and respect for their parents, that neither the severity of their treatment, the impertinency of their old age, nor the meanneſs of their rank, when the children have met with preferment, can ever efface. One can't imagine to what degree of perfection this first principle of nature is improved. There is no submission, no point of obedience which the parents can't command, or which the children can refuse. These children are obliged to comfort them when alive, and continually to bewail them when dead. They prostrate themselves a thousand times before their dead bodies, offer them provisions, as tho' they were yet alive, to signify that all their goods belong to them, and that from the bottom of their hearts they wish them in a capacity to enjoy them. They bury them with a pomp and expence which to us would seem extravagant, they pay constantly at their tombs a tribute of tears, which ceremonies they often perform even to their pictures, which they keep in their houses with all imaginable care, which they honour with offerings, and with as due a respect as they would their parents, were they yet alive. Their kings themselves are not excused this piece of duty, and the present emperor has been observant of it; not only to his predecessors of his own family, but even to those who were not. For one day, when in hunting he perceived afar off the magnificent monument which his father had erected for Tcoumtchin, the last Chinese emperor, who lost his life and crown in a rebellion, he ran to the place, and fell on his knees before the tomb, and even wept, and in a great concern for his misfortune. O prince! says he, O emperor worthy of a better fate! you know that your destruction is no ways owing to us, your death lies not at our door, your subjects brought it upon you. It was them that betrayed you. It is upon

*them, and not on my ancestors, that Heaven must send down vengeance for this act.* Afterwards he ordered flambeaux to be lit, and incense to be offered. During all which time he fixed his countenance on the ground, and arose not till all these ceremonies were over.

The ordinary term of mourning is three years, during which time the mourner can exercise no publick office; so that a Mandarine is obliged to forsake his employ, and a minister of state his office, to spend all that time in grief. If a father be honoured after his death as a god, to be sure he is obeyed in his family like a prince, over whom he exercises a despotick power; as absolute master not only of his estate, which he distributes to whom he pleases, but also of his concubines and children, of whom he disposes with that liberty and power, that he may sell them to strangers when their behaviour displeases him. If a father accuses his son of any crime before a Mandarine, there needs no proof of it; it's supposed to be true, that the son is in the fault if the father be displeased. This paternal power is of that extent, that there is no father, but may take his son's life away, if he will stick to his accusation. When we seemed amazed at this procedure, we were answered: Who understands the merit of the son better than the father, who has brought him up, educated him, and such a long time observed all his actions? And again, can any person have a greater love, or a more sincere affection for him? If therefore he who knows the case exactly, and loves him tenderly, condemns him, how can we pronounce him guiltless and innocent? And when we objected, that some persons have an inbred dislike of others, and that ~~some~~ others who were men, as well as fathers, were capable of such antipathies against some of their children; they answered, that men were not more unnatural than savage beasts, the cruellest of which never destroyed their young ones for a frolick; ~~but~~ supposing /

supposing there be such monsters among men, their children, and their modesty and sweetness of temper, must tame and soften them. But after all, say they, the love of their children is so deeply imprinted in the hearts of parents, that antipathy, or dislike, unless provoked and inflamed by the undutiful stubbornness and disorderly behaviour of their children, can never erase

If it should happen that a son should be so insolent as to mock his parents, or arrive to that height of fury and madness as to lay violent hands on them, it is the whole empire's concern, and the province where this horrible violence is committed is alarmed. The emperor himself judges the criminal. All the Mandarines near the place are turned out, especially those of that town, who have been so negligent in their instructions. The neighbours are all reprimanded for neglecting, by former punishments, to stop the iniquity of this criminal before it came to this height, for they suppose that such a diabolical temper as this must needs have shewed itself on other occasions, since it is hardly possible to attain to such a pitch of iniquity at once. As for the criminal there is no punishment which they think too severe. They cut him into a thousand pieces, burn him, destroy his house to the ground, and even those houses which stand near it, and set up monuments and memorials of this so horrible insolence.

Even the emperors themselves can't reject the authority of their parents, without running the risque of suffering for it, and history tells us a story which will always make the affection which the Chinese have to this duty appear admirable. One of the emperors had a mother who managed a private intrigue with one of the lords of the court, the notice, which was publicly taken of it, obliged the emperor to shew his resentment of it, both for his own honour and that of the empire; so that he banished her into a far distant province, and because he knew

that this action would not be very acceptable to his princes and Mandarines, he forbade them all, under pain of death, giving him advice therein. They were all silent for some time, hoping that of himself he would condemn his own conduct in that affair; but, seeing that he did not, they resolved to appear in it, rather than suffer so pernicious a precedent.

The first, who had the courage to put up a request to the emperor in this matter, was put to death on the spot. His death put not a stop to the Mandarines proceedings; for a day or two after another made his appearance, and, to shew all the world that he was willing to sacrifice his life for the publick, he ordered his hearse to stand at the palace gate. The emperor minded not this generous action, but was the rather more provoked at it. He not only sentenced him to death; but, to terrify all others from following his example, he ordered him to be put to the torture. One would not think it prudence to hold out longer. The Chinese were of another mind, for they resolved to fall one after another rather than basely to pass over in silence so base an action.

There was therefore a third who devoted himself, he, like the second, ordered his coffin to be set at the palace gate, and protested to the emperor that he was not able any longer to see him still guilty of his crime. *What shall we lose by our death,* says he, *nothing but the sight of a prince, upon whom we can't look without amazement and horror. Since you will not hear us, we will go and seek out yours and the empress your mother's ancestors. They will hear our complaints, and perhaps in the dark and silence of the night you will hear ours and their ghosts reproach you with your injustice.*

The emperor being more enraged than ever at this insolence, as he called it, of his subjects, inflicted on this last the severest torments he could devise. Many others, encouraged by these examples, exposed themselves

themselves to torment, and die in effect die the martyrs of filial duty, which they stood up for with the last drop of their blood. At last this heroick constancy wearied out the Emperor's cruelty; and whether he was afraid of more dangerous consequences, or was himself convinced of his own fault; he repented, as he was the father of his people, that he had unworthily put to death his children; and as a son of the empress, he was troubled that he had so long misused his mother. He recalled her therefore, restored her to her former dignity, and after that, the more he honoured her, the more was he himself honoured of his subjects.

The second moral principle, which obtains among them, is to honour their Mandarines as they would the emperor himself, whose person the Mandarines represent. To retain this credit the Mandarines never appear in publick without a retinue, and face of grandeur that commands respect. They are always carried in a magnificent chair open, before them go all the officers of their courts, and round them are carried all the marks and badges of their dignity. The people, wherever they come, open to the right and left to let them pass thro'. When they administer justice in their palaces, no body speaks to them but on their knees, be they of what quality they will, and since they can at any time command any persons to be whipped, no one comes near them without trembling.

Heretofore, when any Mandarin took a journey, all the inhabitants of the towns thro' which he passed ran in a crowd to meet him, and proffer their services, conducting him with all solemnity thro' their territory: now when he leaves his office which he has administer'd to the satisfaction of all men, they give him such marks of honour, as would engage the most stupid to the love of virtue and justice. When he is taking his leave in order to lay down

his office, almost all the inhabitants go in the highways, and place themselves some here, some there, for almost fourteen or fifteen miles together; so that every where in the road one sees tables handsomely painted, with sattin table-cloths, covered with sweet-meats, tea, and other liquors.

Every one almost constrains him to stay, to sit down and eat or drink something. When he leaves one, another stops him, and thus he spends the whole day among the applauses and acclamations of his people: and, which is an odd thing, every one desires to have something which comes from off him. Some take his boots, others his cap, some his great coat; but they, who take any thing, give him another of the same sort, and, before he is quit of this multitude, it sometimes happens that he has had thirty different pairs of boots on.

Then he hears himself called publick benefactor, the preserver and father of his people. They bewail the loss of him with wet eyes; and a Mandarin must be very insensible indeed, if he does not in his turn shed a tear or two, when he sees such tender marks of affection: for the inhabitants are obliged to shew him this respect, and, when they do not like the administration of a governor, they shew themselves as indifferant at his departure, as they do affectionate and sorry at the loss of a good one.

The extraordinary respect which children pay to their parents, and people to their governors, is the greatest means of preserving quietness in their families, and peace in their towns, I am persuaded that all the good order, in which we see so mighty a people, flows from these two springs.

The third principle of morality established among them is this, that it is very necessary that all people should observe towards each other the strictest rules of modesty and civility; that they should behave themselves so obligingly and complaisantly, that all

their

their actions may have a mixture of sweetness and courtesy in them. This, say they, is that which makes the distinction between man and beast, or between the Chinese and other men, they pretend also that the disturbance of several kingdoms is owing to the rough and unpolished temper of their subjects. For those tempers, which fly out into rudeness and passion, perpetually embroiled in quarrels, which use neither respect nor complaisance towards any, are fitted to be incendiaries and disturbers of the publick peace. On the contrary, people who honour and respect each other, who can suffer an injury, and dissemble or stifle it, who religiously observe that difference which either age, quality, or merit have made, a people of this stamp are naturally lovers of order, and when they do amiss it is not without violence to their own inclinations.

The Chinese are so far from neglecting the practice of this maxim, that in several instances they carry it on too far. No sort of men are excused from it, tradesmen, servants, nay, even countrymen have their ways of expressing kindness and civility to one another, I have often been amazed to see footmen take their leave of each other on their knees, and farmers in their entertainments use more compliments and ceremonies than we do at our publick treats. Even the seamen, who from their manner of living, and from the air they breathe, naturally draw in roughness, do yet bear to each other a love like that of brothers, and pay that deference to one another, that one would think them united by the strictest bands of friendship.

The state, which has always, in policy, accounted this as most conducive to the quiet of the empire, has appointed forms of salutation, of visiting, of making entertainments, and of writing letters. The usual way of salutation is to lay your hand cross your breast, and bow your head a little. Where you



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would still shew a greater respect, you must join your hands together, and carry them almost to the ground, bowing your whole body, if you pass by a person of eminent quality, or receive such an one into your house, you must bend one knee, and remain in that posture till he, whom you thus salute takes you up, which he always does immediately. But when a Mandarin appears in publick, it would be a criminal sauciness to salute him in any sort of fashion, unless you have occasion to speak to him, you must step aside a little, and holding your eyes on the ground, and your arms cross your sides, stay till he be gone past you.

Altho' very familiar acquaintance make visits without any ceremony, yet for those friends, who are not so, custom has prescribed a set form of visiting. The visitor sends his servant before with a piece of red paper, on which is wrote his own name, and a great many marks of respect to the person he visits, according as his dignity or quality is. When this message is received, the visitor comes in, and meets with a reception answerable to his merit. The person visited sometimes stays for the visitor in the hall, without going out to meet him, or if he be of a much superior quality, without rising from his seat, sometimes he meets the visitor at his door, sometimes he goes out into the court yard, and sometimes even into the street to bring him in. When they come into view, they both run and make a low bow. They say but little, their compliments are in so many words, one knows what he must say, and the other how he must answer, they never beat their brains, like us, to find out new compliments and fine phrases. At every gate they make a halt where the ceremony begins afresh, and the bows are renewed to make each go first, they use but two ways of speaking on this occasion, which are *Tsin*, that is, Pray be pleased to enter, and *Poucan*, It must not be. Each

Each of them repeats his word four or five times, and then the stranger suffers himself to be persuaded, and goes on to the next doct, where the same thing begins anew

When they come to the room where they are to stay, they stand near the door or a row, and every one bows almost to the ground, then follow the ceremonies of kneeling, and going on this or that side to give the right hand, then the chairs are saluted (for they have their compliments paid them as well as the men, they rub them to take all dust away, and bow in a respective manner to them) then follow the contentions about the first place, yet all this makes no confusion Use has made it natural to the Chinese, they know before what themselves, and what others are to do, every one stays till the others have done in their order what is expected, so that there happens no confusion or disturbance

It must be owned that this is a great piece of fatigue, and after so many motions and different postures, in which they spend a quarter of an hour before they are to sit down, it must be own'd they have need enough of rest The chairs are set so that every body sits opposite to one another, when you are sat, you must sit straight, not lean back, your eyes must look downward, your hands must be stretched on your knees, your feet even, not across, with a grave and composed behaviour, not be over forward to speak The Chinese think that a visit consists not in mutual converse so much as in outward compliment and ceremony, and in China the visitor may truly and properly say he comes to pay his respects, for oftentimes there are more honours paid than words spoken

A missionary did aver to me, that a Mandarin made him a visit, in which he spoke never a word to him This is always certain, that they never overhear themselves with discoursing, for one may generally say of them, that they are statues or figures placed in a theatre for ornament, they have so little of discourse and so much of gravity Their

Their speech is mightily submissive and humble, you will never hear them say, for example, *I am obliged to you for the favour you have done me*, but thus, *the favour which my lord, which my instructor has granted to me, who am little in his eyes, or who am his disciple, has extremely obliged me*. Again, they don't say, *I make bold to present you with a few curiosities of my country*; but *the servant takes the liberty to offer to his lord a few curiosities which came from his mean and vile country*. Again, not *Whatsoever comes from your kingdom or province is well worked*; but *whatsoever comes from the precious kingdom, the noble province of the lord, is extraordinary fine, and exceeding well wrought*. In like manner in all other cases, they never say *I* or *you* in the first or second person; but *me your servant, me your disciple, me your subject*. And instead of saying *you*, they say, *the doctor said, the lord did, the emperor appointed*. It would be a great piece of clownishness to say otherwise, unless to our servants.

During the visit the tea goes round two or three times, where you must use a ceremony when you take the dish, when you carry it to your mouth, or when you return it to the servant. When you depart it is with the same ceremonies with which you came in, and you conclude the comedy with the same expence you began it. Strangers are very uncouth at playing their parts herein, and make great blunders. The reasonable part of the Chinese smile at them and excuse them, others take exceptions at it, and desire them to learn and practise before they venture in publick: for this reason they allow ambassadors forty days to prepare for their audience of the emperor, and, for fear they should miss any ceremony, they send them, during the time allowed, masters of the ceremonies, who teach them, and make them practise.

Their feasts are ceremonious even beyond what you can imagine, you would think they are not invited

to eat, but to make grimaces. Not a mouthful of meat is eat, or a drop of wine drank but it costs an hundred faces. They have, like our concerts of musick, an officer who beats time, that the guests may all together in concord take their meat on their plates, and put it into their mouths, and lift up their little instruments of wood, which serve instead of a fork, or put them again in their places in order. Every guest has a peculiar table, without table-cloth, napkin, knife, or spoon, for every thing is ready cut to their hands, and they never touch any thing but with two little wooden instruments tipp'd with silver, which the Chinese handle very dexterously, and which serve them for an universal instrument,

They begin their feasts with drinking wine, which is given to every guest at one and the same time in a small cup of China or silver, which cup all the guests take hold of with both hands: every one lifts his vessel as high as his head, presenting their service thereby to one another without speaking, and inviting each other to drink first. It is enough if you hold the cup to your mouth only without drinking during the time while the rest drink, for, if the outward ceremonies are observed and kept, it is all one to them whether you drink or not.

After the first cup, they set upon every table a great vessel of hash'd meat, or Ragoo. Then every one observes the motions of the master of the feast, who directs the actions of his guests. According as he gives the sign, they take their two little instruments, brandish them in the air, and, as it were, present them, and after exercising them after twenty fashions, which I can't express, they strike them into the dish, from whence they cleverly bring up a piece of meat, which must be eat neither too hastily nor too slowly, since it would be a rudeness either to eat before others, or to make them stay for you.

Then

Then again they exercise their little instruments, which at length they place on the table in that posture wherein they were at first. In all this, you must observe time, that all may begin and end at once.

A little after, comes the wine again, which is drank with all the ceremonies aforesaid. Then comes a second mess, which they dip into as into the first, and thus the feast is continued until the end, drinking between every mouthful, till there have been twenty or four and twenty different plates of meat at every table, which makes them drink off as many cups of wine; but, we must observe, that besides that, I have said, that they drink as much or as little as they will at a time, their wine cups are very little, and their wine is small.

When all the dishes are served, which are done with all imaginable order, no more wine is brought, and the guests may be a little more free with their meat, taking indifferently out of any of their dishes before them, which yet must be done when the rest of the guests take out of some of their dishes, for uniformity and order is always sacred. At this time they bring rice and bread, for, as yet, nothing but meat has been brought; they bring likewise fine broths, made of flesh or fish, in which the guests, if they think fit, may mingle their rice.

They sit at table serious, grave, and silent, for three or four hours together. When the master of the house sees they have all done eating, he gives the sign to rise, and they go aside for a quarter of an hour into the hall or garden to entertain and divert themselves. Then they come again to the table, which they find set out with all sorts of sweetmeats, and dry'd fruits, which they keep to drink with their tea.

These customs, so strictly enjoin'd, and so extremely troublesome, which must be performed from one end to the other of the feast, keeps all the guests from

from eating, who do not find themselves hungry till they arise from the table. Then they have a great mind to go and dine at home; but a company of strollers come and play over a comedy, which is so tedious, that it wearies one as much as that before at the table did. Nor is tediousness the only fault, for they are commonly very dull and very noisy; no rules are observed, sometimes they sing, sometimes bawl, and sometimes howl, for the Chinese have little skill in making declamations. Yet, you must not laugh at this folly, but all the while admire at the politeness of China, at its ceremonies, instituted, as they say, by the discretion of the ancients, and still kept up by the wisdom of the moderns.

The letters, which are wrote from one to another, are as remarkable for their civilities and ceremonies, which are as many, and as mysterious as the others. They don't write in the same manner as they speak; the bigness of the characters, the distance between the lines, the innumerable titles of honour given to the several qualities of persons, the shape of the paper, the number of red, white, or blue covers for the letter, according to the person's condition, and a hundred other formalities, puzzle sometimes the brain of the most understanding men amongst them, for there is scarce any one who is secretary enough to write and send one of their letters as it ought to be.

There are a thousand other rules practised by the better sort in ordinary conversation, which you must observe, unless you would be accounted a clown; and tho' in a thousand instances these things savour more of a ridiculous affectation than of real politeness, no one can deny nevertheless, but that these customs, which people observe so exactly, do inspire into them a sweetness of temper, and a love of order. These three moral principles, that is, the respect

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respect which children pay their parents, the veneration which all pay the emperor and his officers, and the mutual humility and courtesy of all people, work their effect the better, because, supported by a wise and well understood policy. The principal maxims of which are, my lord, as follow

The first is, Never to give any one an office in his own province, and that for two reasons because, first, a Mandarin of ordinary parentage is usually despised by those who know his family. Secondly, because being brought into favour and repute, by the great number of his kindred and friends, he might be enabled either to make, or to support a rebellion, or at least it would be very difficult for him to execute justice with an universal impartiality

The second maxim is, To retain at court the children of the Mandarines employ'd in the most considerable offices in the province, under pretence indeed of educating them well, but, in reality, keeping them as hostages, lest their fathers should fall from that duty which they owe the emperor.

The third maxim is, That, when one goes to law, such a commissary is made use of as the emperor pleases to name, unless the office or quality of the criminal gives him the liberty to refuse him. If the emperor dislikes the first sentence, he may commission new judges to re-examine, until the sentence be agreeable to his mind, for, otherwise, it would be in the power of money or artifice, to save a man whose life would be noxious to the good of the state. On the other side, say they, we need not fear the prince's passion, who if he have a mind to take off a good man, may find ways enough to do it, without going so openly about it. But it is but fitting that there should be a means efficacious enough to rid the empire of an ill man

The fourth maxim of policy is Never to sell any place, but to bestow it always upon merit; that is, to those of good life, and who by a diligent study have acquainted themselves with the laws and customs of their country. To this end, informations are exhibited of the life and manners of the candidate, especially when a Mandarin is removed from an inferior to a superior office; as for their understanding the laws, they undergo so many examinations and trials of it, that it is impossible for an ignoramus to be thought understanding, so severe are the measures which they take.

When they resolve to set a child apart for learning, they put him to a master, for the towns of China are full of schools, where reading and writing are taught, which, to learn well, will take up some years. When the youth has made a pretty good progress in this, he is presented to a Mandarin of the lower order to be examined. If he writes a good hand, and makes their characters handsome, he is admitted among those who apply themselves to the knowledge of books, and endeavour to obtain a degree; of which there are three sorts, which answer to our bachelor, master of arts, and doctor. As the fortunes of the Chinese do wholly depend upon their capacity and understanding, so they spend their whole life in study. They say by heart all their staple books with a wonderful alacrity; they make comments on their laws: composition, eloquence, imitation and knowledge of their ancient doctors, and the delicacy and politeness of the modern ones, from six to sixty, are their constant employ. In some, the quickness and readiness of wit saves them a great deal of labour, for some have been doctors at an age when others can write but indifferently; but these are heroes amongst the Chinese, of which one in an age is enough.



The examinations are strict, masters of arts are created by the principal Mandarines of the province; batchelors, by those Mandarines assisted by a commissary from court; as for doctors, they confine only at Pekin: but because some, who deserve this degree, have not wherewith to defray so expensive a journey, what is necessary for it is bestowed on them *gratis*, that so poverty may not deprive the state of the service of those men who may prove useful and beneficial to it.

Every one's character is taken from his ability to invent or compose. For this purpose, the candidates are shut up in a close room, without books, without any other paper than what is necessary for them to write on. All the while they are forbidden all manner of correspondents, at the doors are placed by the Mandarines guards, whose fidelity no bribes can corrupt; the second examination is yet more strict, for, lest the commissary sent by the court should himself be byassed thro' favour or the hopes of gain, he is not suffered to see or speak with any person till the examination is over.

In creating the doctors, the emperor often engages himself; the present emperor is more feared by the candidates than any of the other posers, not only for his nice exactness and rigorous justice, but for his extraordinary abilities in judging of any thing of this nature. When the doctors are named, they are presented to him; to three principal of which he gives garlands of flowers, or any other mark of honour, to distinguish them from the rest; some of them likewise he chuses for members of his royal academy, from whence they never remove, unless into posts of the greatest consideration and credit in the kingdom.

The great number of presents, which they receive from their kindred and friends, keeps the doctors from being poor. Every one hopes to make some

some advantage from his friendship, but, lest high promotion should make them negligent, and sit loose to their studies, they still undergo several examinations, where, if they appear to have been negligent, they certainly meet with severity and reproof, whereas, if they have still continued to forward and improve their studies, they meet with a suitable encouragement and reward.

No small share of the publick good is owing to this principle of policy. The youths, whom idleness and sloth never fail to corrupt, are by this constant employment diverted from ill courses, they have scarce time enough to follow their loose inclinations. Secondly, study forms and polish their wits. People, who never engage in arts and sciences, are always blockish and stupid. Thirdly, all offices are fill'd by able men, and, if they can't prevent that injustice which proceeds from the covetousness and corrupt affections of officers, at least, they will take care to hinder that which arises from ignorance and immorality. Fourthly, since the places are given, the emperor may with greater justice turn out those officers whom he shall find undeserving. We ought indeed to punish every offender, yet, it would be natural to bear with a Mandarin who is negligent of his office for want of understanding or application; who is too mild or over severe, if, by taking away his place would ruin his family, whose whole fortune, it may be, was laid out in the purchase of it, when as, if a place be dispos'd only by donation, the prince, who gave it, may easily, without any disturbance, take it from one and gratify another with it.

Lastly, no fees are paid for the administration of justice. The judge, whose office cost him nothing, and who has his salary stated, can require nothing of the parties at law, which impowers every poor man to prosecute his own rights, and frees him from

from being oppressed by the opulence of his adversary, who can't be brought to do justly and reasonably, because the other has not money.

The Chinese have established this as a fifth maxim of policy Never to suffer strangers to have any share in their administration: the small esteem, they bear them, makes the Chinese use them so coarsely. They fancy, that a mixture of natives and foreigners would bring them to contempt, and occasion brought but corruption and disorder. From thence also would spring particular grudges, making parties, and, at last, rebellions. For difference of people necessarily supposes difference of customs, languages, humour, and religion. This makes them no longer children of the same family, bred up to the same opinions, and tempered with the same notions; and be there all imaginable care used in instructing and forming strangers, they are at most but adopted sons, who never have that implicit obedience and tender affection, which children by nature bear to their own parents. So, that should foreigners be better qualified than natives, which you can never make the Chinese believe, they would fancy it for the good of their country to prefer natives to them; and it is little less than a miracle in favour of christianity, that a few missionaries have been suffered to settle there.

This last piece of policy is extremely good, when those of a false religion are kept out, which teaches rebellion and disturbance, itself being the product of caballing and wot; but the case is otherwise in christianity, whose humility, sweetness, and obedience to authority produces nought but peace, unity, and charity among all people. This is what the Chinese begin to be convinced of, having had trial of it for a whole age together. Happy were it, if they would embrace it as a constitution equally necessary for the salvation of their souls.

souls, as conducive to the peace and good of the state.

Their sixth maxim is; That nobility is never hereditary, neither is there any distinction between the qualities of people; saving what the offices, which they execute; makes; so that; excepting the family of Confucius, the whole kingdom is divided into magistracy and commonalty. There are no lands but what are held by socage tenure; not even those lands which are destined for the Bonzes, or which belong to the temples of the idols; so that their gods, as well as men, are subjected to the state, and are obliged by taxes and contributions to acknowledge the emperor's supremacy. When a viceroy or governor of a province is dead, his children, as well as others, have their fortunes to make; and, if they inherit not their father's virtue and ingenuity, his name which they bear, be it never so famous; gives them no quality at all.

The advantages which the state makes of this maxim are, first, trading is in a more flourishing condition, which the laziness of the nobility is the likeliest means to ruin. Secondly, the emperor's revenues are encreas'd by it; because no estates are tax-free. In towns which pay poll-money, no person is exempt. Thirdly, by this means, families are hindered from ingratiating themselves with the populace, and so kept from establishing themselves so far in the people's favour, that it would be a difficulty to the prince himself to keep them within bounds. Lastly, it is a received opinion among the Chinese, that, if an emperor would be obey'd, he must lay his commands upon subjects, and not upon so many little kings.

Their seventh principle of policy is, To keep up in peace as well as war great armies, as well to maintain a credit and respect from the neighbours, as to stifle, or rather prevent any disturbance or

insurrection which may happen at home. Heretofore a million of soldiers were set to guard their great wall. A less number than that also, to garrison their frontiers and great towns, would have been too little. Now they think it enough to keep garrisons in their most important towns.

Besides these standing forces, there are fifteen or twenty thousand men in each province, under the command of private officers; they have also soldiers to keep their islands, especially Haynan and Formosa. The horse-guards of Pekin are above an hundred and sixty thousand; so that, I believe, in the greatest and securest peace, the emperor has in pay and at muster no less than fifty hundred thousand effective men, all armed according to the custom of the country with scimeters and darts. They have but a very small infantry, and of those, which they have there, there are no pikemen, and very few musqueteers.

Their soldiers are very graceful, and pretty well disciplin'd, for the Tartars have almost degenerated into Chinese, and the Chinese continue as they always were, soft, effeminate, enemies of labour, better at making an handsome figure at muster or in a march, than at behaving themselves gallantly in an action. The Tartars begin with heat and briskness, and, if they can make their enemies give ground in the beginning, then they can make their advantage of it; otherwise they are unable to continue an attack a good while, or to bear up long against one, especially, if made in order and with vigour. The emperor, whom I have had the honour to speak with, who says nothing but what is proper, as he does nothing but what is great, gave this short character of them: *They are good soldiers when opposed to bad ones, but bad when opposed to good ones.*

The eighth maxim is concerning their rewards and punishments. Great men, who have faithfully served

seized their country, never lose their reward, and because, be a prince never so opulent, he can never have enough to reward all his subjects this defect is made up by marks and titles of honour, which are very acceptable to the subjects, and no charge to the prince

These titles of honour are what they call the several Orders of Mandarines They say, such an one is a Mandarin of the first rank, or the emperor has placed such an one in the first class of the Mandarines, of the second rank, and in like manner of others This dignity, which is merely honorary, makes them take place in assemblies, visits, and councils, but is no profit to them To make these rewards of greater extent, which the people chuse much sooner than pensions, they are sometimes bestow'd even upon the dead, who are oftentimes made Mandarines after their funerals, who therefore fill sometimes the greatest places of honour amongst the nobility when the emperor can't bestow upon them the meanest place amongst the living They have oftentimes, at the publick or prince's charge, lofty monuments raised for them, and that court, which looks after the publick expences, judges what recompence shall be paid to their desert These rewards are oftentimes accompanied with eulogies in their praise, made by the emperor himself, which makes them and their family famous to all posterity But the highest honour is to make them saints, to build them temples, and offer them sacrifices as to the gods of the country By this means, paganism has been mightily supported by the emperors, adorning themselves the work of their own hands, and paying worship and honour to them, who, when alive, would have been glad to be prostrate at their now worshippers feet.

They reward also in private men those virtuous actions which bring no publick advantage to the state We read in history, that temples have been

raised to the memory of some maids, who all their lives kept their chastity inviolable. And I myself have seen, in several of their towns, trophies with honourable inscriptions, raised up for inhabitants of mean rank and degree, to publish to all the world their virtue and merit.

If the Chinese are very liberal in their rewards, they are as severe in the punishments even of the slightest faults; their punishments are adequate to their demerits. The usual punishment is the bastinado on the back. When they receive but forty, or fifty blows, they call this a Fatherly Correction; to which as well Mandarines, as others, are subject. This punishment is not accounted very scandalous, and, after it is executed, the criminal must fall on his knees before the judge, and, if able, bow three times down to the ground, and give him humble thanks for taking this care of his education.

Yet this punishment is of that violence, that one stroke is enough to fell one that is of a tender constitution, and oftentimes persons die of it; it is true, there are ways of softening this punishment, when the execution of it is in court. The easiest is to bribe the executioners, for there are many of them; because, lest the executioner's weariness should lessen the punishment, after five or six strokes another succeeds, and so till the whole be perform'd. But, when the criminal has by money made them his friends, they understand their business too well, that, notwithstanding all the care which the Mandarines present can use, the punishment becomes light and almost nothing.

Besides this, in the courts there are persons to be hired, who keep a good understanding with the officers; who, upon a signal given, take the place of the criminal, who escapes among the croud, and receives his punishment. For money, there are every where these sorts of vicarious persons to be met with; for

for it is a trade at China, where several persons are maintained by the blows of the cudgel

By such a trick as this, Yam quam sien, a famous prosecutor of christianity, escaped the just sentence of the judges. He engaged a paltry fellow for a large sum of money, to take upon him his name, and go to the court of justice in his stead. He told him, that, let it come to the worst, it was but a good cudgelling, and, if after that he was imprisoned, there should be found out a way to redeem him thence. The poor fellow went according to agreement, and when the cryer call'd out aloud, Yam quam sien, the fellow answered as loud, Here, his sentence was pass'd, and the Mandarin condemned him to death. The officers, who had been brib'd, seized on him immediately, and, according to custom, gagged him, for, after sentence, the criminal is not suffered to speak. Afterwards, he was brought to to the place of execution, where the poor wretch suffered a miserable death.

The second sort of punishment is the Carcan, which differs from the former only in the place where the bastinadoes are given, in this, they are given the criminal at one of the city gates, or in the high way. the punishment here is not so sharp, but the infamy is greater, and he, who has once undergone this punishment, can never more recover his reputation.

They have several different ways of inflicting death. Mean and ignoble persons have their heads cut off, for, in China, the separation of the head from the body is disgraceful. On the contrary, persons of quality are strangled, which, among them, is a death of more credit, if the crime be very notorious, they are punished like mean persons, and sometimes their heads are cut off and hang'd on a tree in the high ways.

Rebels and traitors are punish'd with the utmost severity, that is, to speak as they do, they cut them into ten thousand pieces. for, after that the execu-



tioner hath ty'd them to a post, he cuts off the skin all round their forehead, which he tears by force till it hangs over their eyes, that they may not see the torments they are to endure. Afterwards, he cuts their bodies in what places he thinks fit, and, when he is tir'd with this barbarous employment, he leaves them to the tyranny of their enemies, and the insults of the mob.

Often criminals are cruelly whipp'd till they expire. Lastly, the torture which is the cruellest of all deaths is here used; and generally the hands and fingers suffer most in it.

Ninthly, They think it good policy to forbid women from all trade and commerce, which they can only benefit by letting it alone; all their business lies within doors, where they find continual employment in the careful education of their children. They neither buy nor sell, and one sees women so seldom in the streets, that one would imagine them to be all religiouses confined to a cloyster. Princesses never succeed to the crown, nor ever have the regency during the young prince's minority; and, tho' the emperor may in private consult them, it is reckoned mean and ignoble to do it. In which thing the Chinese seem, in my opinion, less reasonable than in others. For wit and foresight is equally the portion of the one as of the other sex; and a prince is never so understanding as when he knows how to find out all his treasures wheresoever nature has placed them, nor ever so prudent as when he makes use of them.

Lastly, their tenth maxim is, To encourage trade as much as possible thro' the whole empire. All the other policy is conducive to the plenty or convenience of their country, but this is concerned for the very lives of the people, who would be soon reduced to the last extremity if trade should once fail. It is not the people's care only, but the Mandarines also, who

who put out their money to trusty traders to make the best advantage of it By this private way, Ou sanguey, the little king of Xensi, who brought the Tartars into China, made himself so rich and powerful, that he was able himself to support for a long time the war against the emperor

To increase commerce, foreigners have been permitted to come into the ports of China, a thing till lately never known On the other side, the Chinese spread themselves all over the Indies, where they carry silk, china, physical drugs, sugar, japanned works, wine, and potters ware They go to Batavia, Siam, to Achim, Malacca, and especially to Jappon, and Manilla, from which, they are distant but a few days sail From all these places they bring silver, all of which, that is brought from Mexico to the Philippine islands by the Pacifick ocean, is carried from thence to Canton, whence it is spread thro' the whole empire

But the greatest part of their trading lies within themselves, from one province to another, which like so many kingdoms communicate to each other their riches That of Huquam sends rice, that of Canton sugar, from Chequum comes good silk, from Nankim neat and handsome pieces of workmanship, Xensi and Xansi are rich in iron, horses, mules, camels, and firs Tokien yields tea, Lezotum drugs, and so the rest This mutual commerce unites the people, and fills their towns with plenty These, my lord, are not all the Chinese mixims, there are a world of others, but I have wrote down these as the most known and most essential ones for the publick good.

Good order in the inferior governments is as useful a part of policy to the state as any whatever, by these inferior governments, I mean those of the cities, and of the several camps All these are settled in China, for, from the foundation of that empire, the state has thought it worth while to look after even the most inconsiderable things

Among

Among persons of quality, there never happens any dispute about taking place, because every one knows exactly what is due to his own and others quality; and it was a great surprize to every body to see, about six or seven years ago, a prince of the blood and a Colao engaged in such a sort of dispute. The occasion of it was this; the laws ordain, that, when a Colao is about to speak to a prince of the blood, he must bend the knee, but custom has laid as strong an obligation on the prince, to take him up immediately.

The prince thought, that an obliging custom, tho' constantly practised by the royal family on several occasions, ought not to prejudice his right by law. He did therefore give audience to a Colao on his knees, and never made any motion to him to rise. The minister of state, in a great confusion to see himself kept so long in so humble a posture, complained of it to the emperor, who assembled his council forthwith. They looked into the ceremonial to observe what they could find that would contribute to the deciding this novel case, but when they could find nothing therein serviceable to that end they were more perplexed than ever.

Finally, the council, who were against innovations, judged that the practice ought to be continued as before; and, not freeing the Colaos from their obligation of speaking to the princes of the blood on their knees, they thought it requisite also that the princes should use that civility towards them as not to keep them in that posture long. *You can't*, said they to the Colao, *honour the princes too much, and you do not do well to omit any occasion where you can shew the respect you bear them.* Princes, added the emperor to him who had occasion'd this disputa, *are by their own rank set high enough above the rest of mankind, as not to need proudly to seek to debase them lower. They cannot want nothing to make them honourable, but temper and modesty.*

*modesty.* When you are denied the respect due to you, all the world knows you have not what you ought to have; but, when you insist upon every little mark of respect, it will make the world begin to inquire whether you deserve it. Thus both of them were reprimanded, and that no new laws might be made they let custom be their rule.

Every thing, that belongs to the princes or Mandarines, is punctually stated; their pensions, their houses, the number of their servants, the shape and bigness of their sedans, are the badges of honour by which they are distinguished; so that, when they come into publick, their quality is presently known, and the respect which is due to them with as little trouble paid. When the Chinese governed the empire, even private men wore their marks of distinction; and there was no learned man but his degree and rank might be known by the fashion or colour of his garb.

The towns have their determinate figure; they ought all to be square as far as the ground they are built upon will suffer it; in such sort that the gates may be so built as to answer the four principal quarters of the world, that is, the North, South, East, and West. The houses have thorough lights, and are esteemed ill built if the doors do not lie exactly parallel to one of the sides of the town.

Towns of the several orders have different bigness; the chief towns are nine or twelve miles round, those of the first rank are but six; those of the second or third orders are less in proportion. This rule nevertheless is not so universal as to admit of no exception. The streets are strait, generally laid out by the line, large, well paved, yet very inconvenient, because every person of any account goes up and down them either on horseback or in a chair. The houses are low, of an equal height; the jealousy of the husbands would not suffer that their neighbours houses

houses should be higher than their own, lest thereby their windows should overlook their court-yards and gardens.

The whole town is divided into four parts, and those again into several smaller divisions, each of which contains ten houses, over every one of which subdivisions an officer presides, who takes notice of every thing which passes in his little ward, tells the Mandarin what contentions happen, what extraordinary things, what strangers come thither or go thence. The neighbourhood is obliged to give mutual assistance, and, in case of an alarm, to lend one another an helping hand, for, if any theft or robbery be committed in the night, the neighbourhood must contribute towards repairing the loss. Lastly, in every family the father is responsible for the disorders and irregularities committed either by his children or servants.

The gates of the city are well looked after, and even in time of peace are shut up at the approach of night. In the day time there are guards to examine all who come in, if he be a stranger; if he comes from another province, or from a neighbouring town, they know him by his tone, by his mien, or his habit, which in every place are somewhat different. When they observe any thing extraordinary or suspicious, they take the person up, or inform the Mandarin of it; so that European missionaries, whose aspect is infinitely different from that of the Chinese, are known as soon as seen, and those who have not the emperor's approbation find it very difficult to make a long journey.

In certain places, as at *Pekin*, as soon as night comes on they tie chains cross the streets, the guards go the patrol up and down the chief streets, and guards and centinels are placed here and there. The horse go the rounds upon the fortifications; and woe be to him who is found then from home.

Meetings,

Meetings, masquerades, balls, and such like night-works are good, say the Chinese, for none but thieves and the mob. Orderly people ought at that time either to sit up providing for their family, or else take their rest, that they may be refreshed, and better able the next day to manage the business of the family.

Gaming is forbidden both to the commonalty and gentry, which nevertheless hinders not the Chinese from playing, sometimes even so long as till they have lost all their estate, their houses, their children and their wives, which they sometimes hazard upon a card, for there is no degree of extravagance to which the desire of lucre and riches will not carry a Chinese. But besides that it is a disorder which the Tartars, since they became masters of China, have introduced amongst them, they take great heed to conceal their gaming, and by consequence the law which forbids it always flourishes, and is able to suppress great disorders.

What I have said concerning wives, that their husbands may sell them, or lose them at play, puts me in mind to give some account of the rules which the civil constitution, rather than their religion, hath ordained concerning marriages, those who have a mind to marry do not, as among us, follow their own fancies in their choice of a wife they never see the woman they are about to have, but take her parents word in the case, or else they have their information from several old women, who are as it were inspectors, but who are nevertheless in fee with the woman's friends to set her out more than she deserves, so that it is very seldom that they make a true description, or give a just character of her whom they go to view.

The woman's parents give money generally to these emissaries to oblige them to give a favourable character, for it is for the parents advantage that their

their daughter should be reputed handsome, witty, and genteel; because the Chinese buy their wives, and, as in other merchandizes, they give more or less according to the good or bad properties of them.

When the parties are agreed about the price the contract is made, and the money paid down; then preparation is made on both sides for the nuptial solemnities: when the day of marriage is come, they carry the bride in a sumptuous chair, before which go hautboys, drums, and fifes, and after it follow her parents, and other particular friends of her family. All the portion which she brings is her marriage garments, some cloaths, and household goods, which her father presents her with. The bridegroom stands at his door richly attired, waiting for her; he himself opens the sedan, which was closely shut, and, having conducted her into a chamber, delivers her to several women invited thither for that purpose, who spend there the day together in feasting and sporting, while the husband in another room entertains his friends and acquaintance.

This being the first time that the bride and bridegroom see each other, and both, or one, very often not liking their bargain, is very often a day of rejoicing for their guests, but of sorrow for themselves. The women must submit tho' they don't like, because their parents have sold them; but the husbands sometimes are not so complaisant, for there have been some, who, when they first opened the sedan to receive the bride, repulsed by her shape and aspect, have shut the chair again, and sent her and her parents and friends back again, wishing rather to lose their money than enter upon so bad a purchase.

When the Tartars in the late war took Nankim, there happened a passage which made the Chinese merry notwithstanding all their misfortunes. Among all the disorders which the victors committed in that province, they endeavoured to seize upon all the women,

women they could to make money of them. When they took the chief city of that province, they carried all the women thither, and shut them up higgly piggly together in the magazines with other goods. But because there were some of all ages, and degrees of beauty, they resolved to put them into sacks and carry them to market, and so sell them to any one at a venture ugly or handsome. There was the same price set upon every one, and for sixteen or eighteen shillings take which sack you will without opening it. After this manner the soldiers, who were ever insolent in prosperity, abused their victory, and approved themselves more barbarous in the most polite and civil city in the world, than they had been in the desarts of Tartary.

At the day of sale there came buyers enough; some came to recover, if haply they could, their wives or children, who were among those women, others were led thither thro' hopes that good fortune and a lucky chance would put a fortune into their hands. In short, the novelty of the thing brought a great concourse from the adjacent places. An ordinary fellow, who had but twelve shillings in the world, gave it, and chose a sack as did the rest, and carried it off, when he was got out of the crowd, whether thro' curiosity, or a desire to relieve the person in the sack, who complained, he could not forbear opening it. In it he found an old woman, whose age, grief, and ill treatment had made deformed to the highest degree, he was so confoundedly mad at it, that, to gratify his passion and rage, he was going to throw the old woman and sack both together into the river, that the gratification of his passion might be some comfort to him for the loss of his money.

Then the good old gentlewoman said to him, Son, your lot is not so bad as you imagine, be of good cheer, you have made your fortune take  
care



care only of my life, I will make yours happier than ever it has been yet. These words somewhat pacified him: wherefore he carried her into a house hard by, where she told him her quality and her estate. She belonged to a Mandarin of note in the neighbourhood, to whom she wrote immediately. He sent her an equipage agreeable to her quality, and she carried her deliverer along with her, and afterwards was so good a friend to him, that he never had reason to complain that he had lost the two crowns which he laid out in purchasing her.

But to return to the Chinese marriages; I must farther tell you, that a husband may not divorce his wife, except for adultery, and a few other occasions, which seldom or never fall out; in those cases they sell them to whosoever will buy them, and buy another. Persons of quality never do thus, but common people do frequently. If a man has the boldness to sell his wife without just reason, both the buyer and seller are severely punished, yet the husband is not obliged to take her again.

Altho' a man be allowed but one wife, he may have as many concubines as he will; all the children have an equal claim to the estate, because they are reckoned as the wife's children tho' they be some of the concubines; they all call the wife mother, who is indeed sole mistress of the house; the concubines serve and honour her, and have no manner of authority or power but what they derive from her.

The Chinese think it a strange thing that the Europeans are not thus allowed the use of women; yet they confess it as a commendable sign of moderation in them. But when we observed to them the troubles, quarrels, contentions, and jealousies which many women must needs raise in a family, they said nothing is without some inconvenience and disorder, but that perhaps there are more crosses in having  
but,

but one, than in having many women The best, way they own, is to have none at all

• *Tsiho* the Chinese are extremely jealous to that degree that they suffer not their wives to speak in private even to their own brethren, much less give them liberty to enjoy all that freedom and publick diversion which in Europe is esteem ed only gall'entry and curiosity, nevertheless there are husbands so very complaisant to their wives as to let them freely commit adultery, which permission some women make the condition of their marriage those who according to such agreement follow these courses (as there is a certain sort of people who do) have no manner of power to hinder debauchees from frequenting their houses, and from making ill use of the easiness or unruly passions of such women But such families as these are abhorred by the Chinese, who think so ill of them, that their children, tho' never so deserving or intelligent, can never obtun any degree, or be employ ed in any honourable office

or excellent. They mix with this divers <sup>points</sup> of judicial astrology, which ignorance or superstition have invented, concerning happy or unhappy days, times proper for marriage, building, or undertaking journies. These prejudices generally guide the people; but the emperor and all men of sense are wiser than to mind such trifles.

Altho' there be no publick clocks as in Europe, the day is nevertheless divided into four and twenty parts, which have all their particular names, and begin from midnight. They tell me that anciently they divided their day into twelve parts, each of which were subdivided into eight, which made the natural day consist of fourscore and sixteen, which were exactly distinguished in their calculations. But their sun-dials (and they have very ancient ones) were divided into four general divisions, each of which contained four and twenty little subdivisions, which added to the four great divisions divided the whole circle into an hundred parts.

This sort of dialing seems very irregular, nor can I see for what use it was intended. Since they have received the new kalendar from the missionaries, they have regulated their dials by hours, and reckon their time almost as we do, only we must take notice that instead of two hours they reckon but one, so that their natural day consists of but twelve hours, the names of which, diversly combined with ten other terms which they have invented, make a revolution of sixty, which serves them instead of a cycle to mark their different years. I dare not trouble you, my lord, with particular enumerations, which would be too tedious, and are in foregoing relations sufficiently explained.

As for the people, they are not very nice herein; they content themselves with knowing the time of the sun's rising and setting, and noon. In the night they make use of bells and drums, which are very  
often

offer founded, and serve to distinguish the night into five watches;

The current coin is very odd. They have round copper pieces with a hole in the middle, that they may be strung, they are full of characters, the metal is neither pure nor well hammered; and, altho' they are thick, one may break them with one's fingers if one strive; ten of these make a penny, ten of which are the tenth part of the Chinese crown, called by the Portuguese in the Indies, Tael; and by themselves Leam, which crown amounts to six shillings two pence half penny, and  $\frac{2}{3}$  of a farthing.

This crown piece is not coined with any stamp or image on it, as our money in Europe is, the Chinese silver money is not made in any determinate regular form, they take for money any irregular pieces or bits of silver by weight, which if they do not believe to be good silver they cut asunder. This they practise to prevent false and counterfeit money, and they are so expert in guessing at the goodness and value of any piece of silver by looking on it only, that they are seldom mistaken, especially if it be melted after the manner practised there.

They know the goodness of it three ways, by the colour, by several little holes which are made in it by the melting pot, and by divers small circles which the air makes on the surface of the metal when it cools after melting. If the colour be white, the holes small and deep, if the circles be many, and those close, and very fine, especially toward the center of the piece, then the silver is pure but the more it differs from these three qualities so much the more alloy it has.

To explain myself better, I must tell you, they divide their silver with respect to its purity, into a hundred sorts as we do gold into four and twenty, called carats, the silver which is current in trade is all the sorts between the eighth and the hundredth sort.

fort or degree of purity. If it be of a baser alloy they will not take it, but punish those who offer it. They take our money as silver of the fourscore and fifteenth sort, tho' those, who understand silver well, judge it to be but of the fourscore and third sort at most; so that in an hundred ounces of our silver there are seven of alloy, or, which is all one, a hundred ounces of it is worth but ninety three of fine silver.

As for gold, it never passes in China for money no more than jewels do; they buy it as they do other goods or merchandise, and the Europeans make a good market of it, because in China a pound of gold bears but the same proportion to a pound of silver as one does to ten, whereas among us it is as one to fifteen, so that the merchant gets by it generally a third part.

Since almost every thing is there sold by weight, amongst several sort of scales, they make use of a small portable balance, kept in a small varnished case, which is very light and useful; they are something like the Roman balance, consisting of a small dish, an arm, and a weight that slides up and down that arm, which is made of ivory or ebony, in business, length, and shape like a pen; it is divided into three small parts, on three different surfaces, it hangs by silken threads, at one of the ends, three different points, that it may the better weigh weights of every sort. They weigh very nice and exactly; for in those, whose arm is of any considerable length, the thousandth part of a cro- will sensibly turn the scale.

There are two sorts of those scales, one more agreeable to the ancient balances, which are used in courts of justice; the beam of this is so divided exactly to agree with the weight of the French money since it hath been increased by a sixth part in weight so that every division of the beam weighs the weight

Of a sou or penny; so that seventy-two Chinese sours or pennies weigh exactly a French crown, or an ounce English. But the common balance, which is most used in China, is somewhat different from this, for a French crown will weigh seventy-three divisions of this beam; this I thought myself obliged to take notice of, that we may the better understand what the relations hitherto have so much differed about.

The Chinese divide their pound weight, as we do, into sixteen ounces, each ounce into ten parts called Tchien; each of these into ten penny weights; and each of these again into ten grains. There are a great many other divisions, which decrease in the same proportion that one has to ten, which divisions our language has no names for. Altho' these smaller divisions come almost to nothing when single in the scale, yet in great traffick they reckon them, where the multiplication of them arises to a considerable sum. In short, if we suppose that our crown should weigh three drachms, or one and twenty penny weights and eight grains, then the Chinese pound will contain nineteen ounces, three drachms, two penny weights, thirteen grains  $\frac{4}{5}$ . And on the contrary, our pound will contain thirteen ounces Chinese, one Tchien, and four penny weights, understanding these two last weights as they are explained above.

As to the common measures in use in this empire; they have by divers persons been represented in different manners; and of those who have wrote upon this subject, some have had recourse to the measures of one province, others to those of another. I have examined all of them carefully, and do think that father Verbiest's measures, which they use in the mathematical court, are the exactest. The Chinese foot is very little different from ours; not but that ours is somewhat longer, almost  $\frac{1}{10}$ ; but this difference

rence is nothing with the Chinese, who do not stand so nicely and strictly to their measure as we do, which the people have to measure with, and not to contend and quarrel by.

The civil government of the Chinese does not only preside over the towns, but extends also over the highways, which they make handsome and easily passable. The passages for their water are in several places fenced in with stone walls for the convenience of travelling, over which there are a great number of bridges, which unite the towns and the fields together. Canals are also cut for the water to pass thro' all the towns of the southern provinces, to make their ditches more secure, and the towns more pleasant. In low and marshy grounds, they throw up prodigious long banks, which keep their roads in those parts good; to perform which they stick at no cost, cutting a passage even thro' mountains when they stand in their way.

The road from Sigan to Hamchou is one of the strangest pieces of work in the world. They say, for I myself have never yet seen it, that upon the side of some mountains which are perpendicular, and have no shelving, they have fixed large beams into them, upon which beams they have made a sort of balcony without rails, which reaches thro' several mountains in that fashion; those, who are not used to this sort of galleries, travel over them in a great deal of pain, afraid of some ill accident or other: but the people of the place are very hazardous; they have mules used to this sort of roads, which travel with as little fear or concern over these steep and hideous precipices, as they could do in the best or plainest heart. I have in other places exposed myself very much by following too rashly my guides.

One can't imagine what care they take to make the common roads convenient for passage. They

are four score feet broad or very near it, the soil of them is light and soon dry when it has left off raining. In some provinces there are on the right and left hand causeways for the foot passengers, which are on both sides supported by long rows of trees, and oftentimes terrassed with a wall of eight or ten feet high on each side, to keep passengers out of the roads. Nevertheless these walls have breaks, where roads cross one the other, and they all terminate at some great town.

There are several wooden machines made like triumphal arches set up in the roads about a mile and a half distant from each other, about thirty feet high, which have three doors, over which is wrote, upon a large frieze, in characters so large as may be read at almost half a quarter of a mile distance, how far it is from the town you left, and how far to the town you are going to, so that you have no need of guides here, for you may by these directions see what place the road leads to, and from whence you ~~came, how far you are~~ already gone, and how far you have yet to go.

The great care, which they have taken to lay out all these distances by the line, makes the account which these inscriptions give to be pretty sure, yet they are not equal, because the miles in some provinces are longer than in others. It has happened likewise that some of these arches, being ruined and consumed by decay and time, have not been set up exactly in the same place, but generally speaking they serve for a good measure of the highways, besides that in several places they are no small ornament.

On one side of these ways, about the same distance, are fix'd little towers made of earth cast up, on which ~~the emperor's~~ the emperor's standard; near it is a lodge for soldiers or country militia. These are made use of in time of rebellion, or indeed at any other time, to carry any express if occasion be, or to hand letters from



from one to another ; but especially they take care to stop highwaymen and robbers.

Every man who goes by armed is obliged to give an account whence he came, whither he is going, upon what business, and must shew his pass. Besides these guards, in case of an alarm, give a helping hand to travellers, and stop all those who are suspected or accused of robbery. Among the mighty number of inhabitants which are in China, a great part of which scarce know how to get a subsistence, a body would imagine that abundance must needs turn thieves ; yet one may travel there with as great safety as here. I have travelled there six thousand miles, up and down, thro' almost all the provinces, and was never but once in danger of being robbed. Four strange horsemen followed me for a whole day together, but the roads were so full of travellers, up and down, that they could never get the coast clear for a quarter of an hour together, and so fell short of their aim.

Their posts are as well regulated as ours in Europe are, at the emperor's sole charge, who for that end maintains a great number of horse. The couriers go from Peking for the capital cities, the viceroys of which, as soon as they have received the dispatches from court, send them forthwith by other couriers to the towns of the first rank ; from whence they are by these governors conveyed to those of the second rank under their jurisdiction, and from thence they are transmitted to the towns of the third rank. It is true these posts were not established for the conveyance of private letters, yet the postmasters, for a little money, undertake to carry letters for private men, as they always do for the missionaries, who find it as sure a way as that used in Europe, and much less chargeable.

As it is a matter of importance that the emperor's orders be quickly transmitted, so it is a great part of

of the Mandarin's care to see that the roads be good; and the emperor, to keep them the more strict to this, spreads a report, that he intends shortly to visit this or that province. The governors of those provinces spare no charge or pains to repair those roads, because it not only concerns their fortunes, but sometimes their life, if this care be neglected.

As I once passed just by a village of the third rank, in the province of Xensi, they told me that the governor had just hanged himself thro' despair, lest he should not have time enough to repair a road thro' which the emperor was to pass to the capital town. The emperor nevertheless never went the journey, so that the Mandarin might have saved his life by a little patience. But yet, all the care, which the Chinese can use, will never prevent a mighty inconvenience which happens to those who travel in their roads.

The soil of China is mighty light, and very much broken by the vast multitudes who travel, some on foot, some on camels, others in litters, and again others in chariots, so that the roads are perfectly ground into very fine powder; when this is raised by travellers, and carried about by the winds, it is enough to blind all passengers if they have not masks or veils on them. Thro' these clouds you must continually make your way, and suck them in instead of air, during whole journeys together. When the weather is hot, and the sun in any's face, scarce any one, except a native, can withstand it. I have sometimes been forced to desist from my journey and come back again.

But of all their wholesome institutions there is none which contributes so much to the keeping up peace and order, as does their method of levying the emperor's revenue. They are not troubled in China with such swarms of officers and commissio-

ners as we are. All the estates there are taxed, and all the families registered; and, whatsoever the emperor is to have by excise on goods, or ~~tax~~ upon persons, is publickly known, every body brings what is due from him, to the Mandarines or governors of the towns of the third rank, for there is no particular receiver appointed. Those, who neglect to bring in their dues, do not lose by confiscation, which would be to punish the innocent of that family with the guilty, but the persons so offending suffer imprisonment, and undergo the bastinado till they have made satisfaction.

These Mandarines of the lower rank give in an account of what they receive, to a general officer of the province, who accounts with the court of Peking, which looks after the publick exchequer. A great part of the revenue is disbursed up and down the provinces in pensions, salaries, soldiers pay, and publick buildings: what is over is carried to Peking, to maintain the emperor's court, and other expences in that town, where the emperor keeps a pay above an hundred and sixty thousand regular troops, to whom, as well as to the Mandarines, is given out every day meat, fish, rice, pease, and straw, according to every one's rank, besides their constant pay, which they regulatly receive.

c. That, which comes from the southern provinces, is alone sufficient to answer this expence, this they bring by water in the emperor's vessels, yet, they are so jealous lest the revenue should at any time fall short of the disbursements, that in Peking there are magazines of rice before hand, sufficient for three years; which will keep a great while if it be well fanned and mixed, and altho' it looks not so well, nor tastes so pleasantly as new rice, yet it is not more wholesome and nourishing.

r. This numerous army about the emperor, well looked after, duly paid, and exactly disciplin'd, one

one would think, should awe all Asia; yet their idleness, and the small use they ever have occasion to make of their weapons, does contribute to weaken them as much as their natural effemina-  
cy. The western Tartars do not value their numbers a straw, and frequently say in derision of them, that the neighing of a Tartary horse is enough to rout all the Chinese cavalry.

Yet, they take all possible care to have good soldiers, for they take no officers into the guards, till they have made trial of their stoutness, skill, and dexterity in military affairs. They are regularly examined, so that as learned men have their doctors to examine them, so these have also their professors.

These officers do regularly exercise their companies; they form them into squadrons, march them, teach them to divide their files, to march thro' narrow passages, shew them to give the onset, to rally at the sound of the cornet or trumpet, besides, they are very dexterous in managing their bow, or handling their scymitar, yet soon broke, and by the least thing in the world put into disorder. The occasion of this I apprehend to be, because in the education of their youth they never instil into them principles of honour and bravery, as we do as soon as ever they are big enough to know what weapons are. The Chinese are always talking to their children of gravity, policy, law, and government, they always set books and letters in their view, but never a sword into their hands. So that having spent their youthful days behind the counter, or at the bar, they know no other courage but that of defending obstinately an ill cause, and are listed into the soldiery on no other consideration, but that they may hope there will be no occasion for fighting. The Chinese policy hinders hereby a great many domestick feuds and disturbances, but, at the same time

time it does expose its subjects hereby to the insults of foreigners, which is ten times worse.

Thus, my lord, I have set before you a general scheme of the government of China, of which people have spoke such wonders, and which is indeed admirable for its antiquity, for the wisdom of its maxims, for the plainness and uniformity of its laws, for that exemplary virtue which it has ~~produced~~ produced in a long succession of emperors, for that regularity and order which it has kept the people in, in despite of civil or foreign wars; which, notwithstanding, like the rest of the things of this world, is subject to a great many inconveniences; to rebellions, which have depopulated whole provinces, to the injustice of some princes who have abused their power, to the avarice of Mandarins, who have often oppressed the people, to invasions from abroad, and treachery from home, to such a number of changes, as would have unhinged the very government and laws, if a more politick people, than are the Tartars, were near enough the empire to introduce their own method of government.

It would, my lord, be a piece of flattery to myself, to imagine, that I have by this tedious account added any thing to that immense store of knowledge which you have drawn from the best springs of antiquity, from the conversation of the most ingenious of the moderns, and from the management of the most momentous affairs, or (which is a greater fountain of understanding) from your own natural wit and ingenuity, which has made you (if I may use the expression) a native of all countries, and a philosopher of all ages.

But I am sure you will be glad to see, that the truest maxims of good policy are not altogether strangers in the East; and that, if China demand so great ministers as you are, it forms great enough to understand your worth, and to follow your

your steps, and improve themselves from the copy  
you set them, if they could but know you. I am,  
in the most profound manner,

• My Lord,

Your Eminence's most obedient

and most humble Servant,

• L. J.

~~~~~  
L E T T E R X.

To my Lord Cardinal de Bouillon.

Concerning the Ancient and Modern Religion of
China.

My Lord,

I Do not at all wonder that your highness is pleased to hear relations of China. It belongs only to great princes to be thoroughly acquainted with all that concerns the several kingdoms of the world, and to make a true judgment of the power and grandeur of empires. God, who has sent such men into the world to govern it, has given them more than ordinary ability and knowledge to perform it; so that, my lord, if I take upon me the liberty to acquaint your lordship with what repeated voyages for the space of several years have given me to know in this affair, it is not so much to instruct you in it, as to beg your highness's judgment of it.

I may say this still with more truth when I have the honour to write to you of religion. This
is

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is more particularly your concern; and I may say, that if your quality, your ingenuity, and your incomparable learning have made you above ~~all~~ ^{all} men our judge; your eminent dignity in the church obliges us, in sacred concerns, to hear and consult your highness as our oracle.

'Tis on this prospect, my lord, that I now present to you these memoirs with some ~~renewal~~ ^{renewal}, which the customs of the Chinese and the reading of their books have suggested to me concerning their religion, being of this mind, that, after so many different opinions and long disputes which have for a whole age divided the most learned missionaries, there is no better way of coming to decision, than to obtain your highness's judgment therein.

Religion has always had a great share in establishing the greatest kingdoms, which could never support themselves, were not the people's minds and hearts tied together by the outward worship of some deity; for people are naturally superstitious, and rather follow the guidance of faith than reason. It was therefore for this reason that the ancient lawgivers always made use of the knowledge of the true God, or of the false maxims of idolatry, to bring the barbarous nations under the yoke of their government.

China, happier in its foundation than any other nation under the sun, drew in the chief of the holy maxims of their ancient religion from the fountain head. The children of Noah, who were scattered all over the eastern parts of Asia, and, in all probability, founded this empire, being themselves in the time of the deluge witnesses of the omnipotence of their Creator, transmitted the knowledge of him, and instilled the fear of him into all their descendants; the foot-steps, which we find in their histories, will not let us doubt the truth of this.

Fohi, the first emperor of China, carefully bred up several sorts of creatures, which he used to sacrifice to the supreme Spirit of heaven and earth. For this reason some called him Paohi, that is, Oblation; a name, which the greatest saints of the old and new testament would have been proud to have, and which was reserved for him alone, who made himself an oblation both for saints and sinners.

Hoamti, the third emperor, built a temple to the sovereign Lord of heaven, and altho' Judea had the honour of consecrating to him one more rich and magnificent, hallowed even by the presence of our Creator, and the prayers of our Redeemer, it is no small glory to China, to have sacrificed to their Creator in the most ancient temple of the world.

Yuen hio, the fifth emperor, thought afterwards, that one place was too narrow to contain the services paid to the Lord of the universe. He therefore instituted priests or ecclesiastical Mandarines in several provinces, to preside over the sacrifices. He gave them strict command to observe that divine service was performed with all humility and respect, and that all the religious ceremonies were strictly observed.

Tiho, his successor, took as much care of religion as he had done. Histories relate, that the empress his wife, being barren, begged children of God during the sacrifice with such fervour and earnestness, that she conceived in a few days, and some time after, was brought to bed of a son, who was famous for that forty emperors successively reigned of his family.

Yao and Chan, the two princes who succeeded him, were famous for their piety and for the wisdom of their governments, that it is very likely that religion was still more flourishing during their reigns.

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It is also very probable, that the three succeeding families did preserve the knowledge of God for about 2000 years, during the reigns of 80 emperors; since the learnedest among the Chinese maintain, that, before the superstitions introduced with the god To into China, there were no idols or statues seen. This is certain, that, during all that space of time, the observation of the emperor Yao's maxims was commended to the princes, of which the most essential and principal was concerning the worship of the sovereign Lord of the world; and altho' some emperors have been so wicked as to reject them so far, as even to threaten Heaven itself, and foolishly challenge it to fight, they have been nevertheless looked upon as monsters; and other emperors about that time have discovered by their actions a good sense of religion.

You vam, the first of the third line, did himself, according to ancient custom, offer sacrifices, and his brother who bore him a passionate love, and thought his life still necessary for the good of the kingdom, seeing him one day in danger of dying, prostrated himself before the Divine Majesty to beg his recovery. *It is you, O Lord, said he, who have given him to his people; he is our father, he is our master. If we fall into any disorder, who can set us to rights again so well as he? And if we follow exactly what thou hast inspired him to teach us, why punishest thou us by taking him? As for me, O Lord, continued the good prince, I can be but little serviceable to this world; if you desire the death of a prince, I offer up my life with all my heart for a sacrifice, if you will be pleased to spare my master, my king, and my brother.* The history says, his prayer was heard, for he died as soon as he had put up his petition. An example which demonstrates, that not only the tenour of religion was preserved among those people, but farther, that they followed the dictates.

dictates of the purest charity, which is the very quintessence and perfection of religion.

But Tchim-vam, his son and successor, gave such bright marks of his piety, towards the end of his life, that it leaves us no room to doubt of the truth of what I have advanced. You shall hear what the ancient Chinese books say of him: This prince, ~~for~~ They, who had always regulated his behaviour according to the ordinances of the supreme Governor of heaven, fell dangerously ill in the fiftieth year of his age, and thirty-seventh of his reign. When he knew the danger he was in, he calld together the principal officers of his court, with a design to nominate his successor, and that he might omit nothing which was usually performed on such occasions, he arose from his throne where he had ordered his servants to set him; he made them wash his hands and face, cloath him with his imperial habits, and put his crown on his head; and then, leaning on a table of precious stone, he spake to the company in this manner.

My sickness is every day worse and worse, for this has Heaven ordain'd; I fear death will seize upon me, and therefore thought myself obliged to acquaint you with my last will. You know how great the reputation of my father and grandfather was, and how bright the examples of virtue, which they set the empire, did appear. I was very unworthy to fill the place in which these great men sat; notwithstanding, I did succeed them, I do nevertheless acknowledge my ignorance and unfitness.

It is for this reason perhaps, that Heaven has shorten'd the days of my reign. I ought in this, ~~as well as~~ in all other things, to acquiesce; for you have all seen that I have hitherto received its orders with an humble fear, and a profound respect. I have endeavour'd to follow them, without ever
deviating

‘ deviating from them the least in the world; I have
 ‘ also all my life time had in my heart my ancestors
 ‘ instructions touching my duty to Heaven, and to
 ‘ my people. On these two heads I cannot accuse
 ‘ myself of any fault, and, if my life has had any
 ‘ reputation, it is all owing to that teachableness,
 ‘ which has brought down upon me the blessings of
 ‘ the sovereign Master of the world.

‘ It is on your account that I speak } his (addressing
 ‘ himself to his eldest son) it is on your account,
 ‘ oh, my son; be you the inheritor of your ancestors
 ‘ virtue, rather than of my power and crown. I
 ‘ make you a king, ’tis all that you can have of me;
 ‘ be a wise, virtuous, and unblameable prince, this
 ‘ I command you, and the whole empire expects
 ‘ from you.”

Under the reigns of this prince and his son ^{it} was, that peace, honesty, and justice reigned in China, so that they oftentimes sent their prisoners to dig or plough the grounds, or get in the corn, without thinking that the fear of punishment would make them run away. After harvest they came again to receive that punishment of their faults which the Mandarines had appointed.

Lastly, if we examine well the history of China, we shall still find, that for three hundred years after, that is to say, down to the times of the emperor Yeouvan, who reigned eight hundred years before Christ, idolatry had not corrupted this people, so that they have preserved the knowledge of the true God for near two thousand years, and that not only their Maker in such a manner as may serve both for an example and instruction to christians themselves.

They had all along a strict care to breed up beasts for sacrifices, and to maintain priests to offer them up; besides, that the internal worship of the deity was prescribed, they did oblige themselves to a nice observation

observation of even the smallest ceremonies which might in any ways be serviceable to the people's edification; the empresses did themselves breed up silkworms, and with their own hands worked coverings for the altars, and habits for the priests. The emperors have oftentimes tilled the ground, which produced the corn or wine destined for sacred uses. Again, the priests never dared to offer sacrifices before the people, unless prepared for it by an abstinence of three or seven days from conjugal enjoyments. They have had their solemn fast-days, and days of prayer in publick, especially when the empire laboured under any publick calamity, either by barrenness, by floods, by earthquakes, or wars from abroad.

With this outward worship it is, that the emperors prepare themselves for war; for taking upon themselves the government, or visiting the provinces; and that Heaven may favour their enterprises with success, they inquire of their subjects of their own faults, that they may amend them, believing that all publick calamities are occasioned thro' their ill government. We meet with a signal instance of this in history, which I cannot forbear reciting.

An universal barrenness having continued over all the provinces for seven years together (which time seems not far distant from the seven years of barrenness of which the scripture speaks, and perhaps this turning a little looked into may serve to amend or confirm our chronology *); the people were reduced to extreme want; and when prayers, fasts, and other acts of humiliation were used without success, the emperor not knowing any means proper to be used to gain relief from this publick misfortune, after having offered to God several sacrifices to appease his indignation.

This emperor died 1753 years before the birth of Jesus Christ, and the seven years of scarcity, according to the scripture, happened 1743 years before the same birth.

dignation, he resolved at last to offer up himself for a sacrifice.

For this purpose he called together the chief persons of his kingdom, in the presence of them all dismantled himself of his royal apparel, and clothed himself meanly. In this habit, with his head and face bare, in the same fashion that a criminal appears before a judge, he marched attended by his whole court, to a mountain a good distance from the town. When, prostrating himself before the divine Majesty, to whom he paid his adorations nine times, he spake in these words: *O Lord, you know the miseries to which we are reduced. It is my sins which have brought them upon my people, I come hither to own and acknowledge it in the presence of heaven and earth. That I may the better amend my faults, give me leave, O Lord, of all the world, to ask what action of mine has more particularly given you offence. Is it the splendor of my palace? I will take care to retrench what is superfluous: perhaps the profuseness of my table, or the delicacy and voluptuousness of it have brought this scarcity. hereafter nothing shall be seen there but thriftiness and temperance. The laws permit to me the use of concubines, but perhaps you dislike that I have too many. I am ready to lessen the number. And, if all this be not sufficient to appease your just indignation, and you must have an oblation, behold one, O Lord, I am heartily willing to die, if thou wilt spare this good people. let rain come from heaven on their fields to relieve their necessities, and thunder on my head to satisfy your justice.*

The prince's piety touch'd the clouds, for the air was presently overcast, and an universal rain immediately fell, which did in due season bring forth a fruitful harvest. When idolaters seem scandalized at the death of Jesus Christ, we use the example of this prince to justify our faith. You not only approve of this action, say we to them, in which one of your

emperors

emperors disrob'd himself of all that was magnificent, and offer'd himself a sacrifice for his subjects; but you admire it, and recommend it to posterity as a fit pattern for all the princes of the world: how then can you dislike that excessive love and kindness; which made Jesus Christ offer himself an oblation and sacrifice for all men; and despoil himself of the brightness of his Majesty, to invest us one day with his glory and divinity?

These footsteps of the true religion, which we find in China for so many ages together, carry us naturally to make a reflection, which will justify the providence of the Almighty in the government of the world. People are sometimes amaz'd, that China and the Indies have been overshadow'd by the clouds and darkness of idolatry, almost ever since the birth of our Saviour, while Greece, a great part of Africk, and almost all Europe, have enjoy'd the clear light of faith; but they never consider, that China, for two thousand years, had the knowledge of the true God, and have practis'd the most pure morality, while Europe and almost all the world wallow'd in error and corruption.

God, in the distribution of his gifts, is not an unjust respecter of persons; yet he has laid out his times, to let his grace shine forth in due season, which, like the sun, rises and sets in different parts of the world, according as people make a good or bad use of it.

I do not know whether I may make bold to add, that as the sun, which by its constant motion hides itself to some, to shew itself to others, has notwithstanding, at the year's end, distributed to every country its equal portion of light and warmth; so God by the secret and hidden course of his grace and spirit, which have been communicated to the world, hath equally divided them to all people in the world, tho' in different manners, and at different times. However it be, that God has made his wise distribution of
Y. 2
grace,

grace, I am sure of all nations China has least reason to complain, since no one has receiv'd a larger portion than she.

The knowledge of the true God, which lasted many ages after the reign of Cam-vam, and in all probability, a long while after the time of Confucius, was not always supported in the same purity. Their minds were possessed by idolatry, and their manners became so corrupt, that the true faith, being but the occasion of greater ill, was by little and little taken away from them by the just judgment of God. Among all the superstitions which follow'd hereupon, there were two sorts which were principally established, and do, between them at this present, comprehend almost all the empire.

Li Laokun gave rise to the first of these. He was a philosopher who lived before Confucius; his birth was prodigious, if you believe what his followers say of it: for his mother carried him more than four score years in her flanks, from whence, a little before her death, he sprang out of her right side, which opened itself. This monster, to the sorrow of his country, survived his mother, and by his pernicious doctrine in a short time grew famous: nevertheless he wrote several useful books; of virtue, of the good of avoiding honour, of the contempt of riches, of that incomparable retiredness of mind, which separates us from the world the better to know ourselves. He often repeated the following sentence, which he said was the foundation of true wisdom. *Eternal reason produced one, one produced two, two produced three, and three produced all things*: which seems to shew as if he had some knowledge of the Trinity.

But he taught that God was corporeal, and that he governed other deities as a king governs his subjects. He applied himself mightily to chymistry, of which some pretend he was the inventor. He beat his brains likewise about the philosopher's stone, and did

did at length fancy, that, by a certain sort of drink, one might be immortal. To obtain which his followers practise magick, which diabolical art, in a short time, was the only thing studied by the gentry. Every body studied it in hopes to avoid death; and the women thro' natural curiosity, as well as desire to prolong their life, applied themselves to it, wherein they exercise all sorts of extravagancies, and give themselves up to all sorts of impieties.

Those, who have made this their professed business, are called Tien se, that is Heavenly Doctors; they have houses given them to live together in society, they erect in divers parts temples to Laokun their master; king and people honour him with divine worship; and altho' they have examples enough to have undeceived them from these errors, yet they vehemently pursue immortality, by his precepts who could never gain it himself.

Time, which strengthens and confirms what is ill, did at length gain these false doctors such a reputation, as made them almost innumerable. The covenants which they make with the devil, the lots which they cast, their magical wonders, whether true or only seeming, make them dreaded and admired of the common herd; and, whencesoever it comes to pass, there is no body, who does not give some credit to their maxims, or does not hope to avoid death by their means.

One of these doctors * got himself so great a reputation, that the emperor gave him the name Cham-ti; which is the name by which they call God himself; and signifies Supreme Emperor. This piece of impiety gave the killing blow to the ancient religion; for till then the Chinese, as much idolaters as they were, did always make a distinction between the Cham-ti, and the other gods. But, by a just judgment from God, the family of that prince was ex-

tinct, and the empire, which had hitherto observed its own rules of government, was the first time forced to submit to those of the western Tartars. This famous Colao †, who printed a book, could not but acknowledge: *In this time, says he, the emperor Hœi-tcoum did, against all manner of reason, give the attributes of the supreme God to a man. This most powerful and adorable God, above all the spirits in heaven, was sensible of the wrong done him; for he punished severely the wickedness of this prince, and utterly rooted out his family.*

The second sect, which is prevalent in China, and is more dangerous and more universally spread than the former, adore an idol which they call Fo or Foe, as the only god of the world. This idol was brought from the Indies two and thirty years after the death of Jesus Christ. This poison began at court, but spread its infection thro' all the provinces, and corrupted every town: so that this great body of men, already spoiled by magick and impiety, was immediately infected with idolatry, and became a monstrous receptacle for all sorts of errors. Fables, superstitions, transmigration of souls, idolatry and atheism divided them, and got so strong a mastery over them, that, even at this present, there is not so great an impediment to the progress of christianity, as is this ridiculous and impious doctrine.

No body can well tell where this idol Fo, of whom I speak, was born; (I call him an idol and not a man, because some think it was an apparition from hell) those, who with more likelihood say he was a man, make him born above a thousand years before Jesus Christ, in a kingdom of the Indies, near the line, perhaps a little above Bengala. They say he was a king's son. He was at first call'd Che-Ki; but at thirty years of age he took the name of Fo. His mother, who brought him into the world thro'

† *Kiou Kion Chan.*

her night side, died in childbirth she had a fancy in her dream, that she swallow'd an elephant, and for this reason it is, that the Indian kings pay such honour to white elephants for the loss of which, or gaining some others, they often make Litter wars

When this monster was first born he had strength enough to stand alone, and he made seven steps, and pointed with o^{ne} hand to heaven, and the other to the earth He did also speak, but in such a manner as shew'd what spirit he was possess'd withal *In heaven, or on earth, says he, I am the only person who deserve to be honoured* At seventeen he married, and had a son, which he forsook, as he did all the rest of the world, to retire into a solitude with three or four Indian philosophers, whom he took along with him to teach But at thirty he was on a sudden possess'd, and, as it were, fill'd with the divinity, who gave him an universal knowledge of all things From that time he became a god, and began, by a vast number of seeming miracles, to gain the people's admiration *The number of his disciples is very great, and it is by their means, that all the Indies have been poisoned with his pernicious doctrine* Those of Siam call them Talapoins, the Tartars call them Lamas or Lama sem, the Japoners Bonzes, and the Chinese Hocham

But this chimerical god found at last, that he was a man as well others He died at 79 years of age, and, to give the finishing stroke to his impiety, he endeavoured to persuade his followers to atheism at his death, as he had persuaded them to idolatry in his life time Then he declared to his followers, that all which he had hitherto told them was enigmatical, and that they would be mistaken, if they thought there was any other first principle of things besides nothing; *It was, said he, from this nothing, that all things sprang, and it is into this nothing, that all things must*

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return. This is the abyss where all our hopes must
end.

Since this impostor confessed, that he had abused the world in his life, it is but reasonable, that he should not be believed at his death. Yet, as impiety has always more champions than virtue, there was among the Bonzes a particular sect of atheists, formed from the last words of their master. (The rest, who found it troublesome to part with their former prejudices, kept close to their first errors. A third for- endeavoured to reconcile these parties together, by compiling a body of doctrine, in which there is a twofold law, an interior and an exterior. One ought to prepare the mind for the reception of the other. It is, say they, the mould which supports the materials till the arch be made, and then is taken away as useless.

Thus the devil, making use of mens folly and malice for their destruction, endeavours to erase out of the minds of some those excellent ideas of God, which are so deeply ingravened there, and to imprint in the minds of others the worship of false gods under the shapes of a multitude of different creatures, for they did not stop at the worship of this idol. The ape, the elephant, the dragon, have been worshipped in several places, under pretence perhaps, that the god Fo had successively been transmigrated into these creatures. China, the most superstitious of all nations, increased the number of her idols, and one may now see all sorts of them in the temples, which serve to abuse the folly of this people.

It is true, they sometimes do not pay to these gods all that respect which seems due to their quality. For it often happens, that, if the people after worshipping them a great while do not obtain what they desire, they turn them off, and look upon them as impotent gods, others use them in the most reproachful manner: some load them with hard names, others with hard

Yard blows. How now, *Dog of a spirit*, say they to them sometimes, we give you a lodging in a magnificent temple, we gild you handsomely, feed you well, and often offer incense to you, and after all this care, which we take of you, you are so ungrateful as to refuse what we ask of you.

Then they tie him with cords, pluck him down, and drag him along the streets thro' all the mud and dunghills, to punish him for the expence of perfume which they have offered up to him for nothing. If in the mean time it happens, that they obtain what they did desire, then they take the idol, and with a great deal of ceremony carry him back and place him in his nich again, after they have washed and cleansed him: they fall down to him, and make excuses for what they have done. In truth, say they, we were a little too hasty, as well as you was somewhat too long in your grant; why should you bring this beating on yourself? Were it not better to have granted our petition of your own free will, rather than be forced to do it? But what is done can't be now undone, let us not therefore think of it any more; if you will forget what is passed we will gild you over again.

A few years ago there happened a passage at Nankin, which does very well discover what an opinion the Chinese have of their gods. A man, whose only daughter was very ill, tried all the physicians, but without effect; he thought it therefore his best way to betake himself to the assistance of his gods. Prayers, offerings, alms, ~~sacrifices~~, and all other means, were used to obtain relief. The Bonzes, who were grafted in the fist, promised that an idol, whose power they mightily boasted, should grant her recovery. For all this the woman died, the father out of measure grieved, resolved to revenge himself, and to bring a formal accusation against

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He put in his complaint therefore to the judge of the place, in which after he had lively shewed forth the deceitfulness of this unjust god, he said, that he deserved an exemplary punishment for having broke his word. If this spirit, said he, could cure my daughter, it is palpable cheating to take my money, and yet let her die. If he could not do it, what does he signify? And how came he by his quality of godship? Do we worship him, and the whole province offer him sacrifice for nothing at all? So that he concluded it to be either from the malice and weakness of the idol, that the cure was not performed; wherefore his temple he judged ought to be pulled down, his priests shamefully dismissed, and the idol punished in his own private person.

The business seemed of consequence to the judge, wherefore he sent it to the governor, who, desiring to have nothing to do with those of the other world, desired the viceroy to examine into it. After he had heard the Bonzes, who were extremely concerned at it, he took their part, and advised him not to persist in the cause any longer: for, said he to him, you are not wise, to concern yourself with this sort of spirits. They are naturally ill tempered, and I am afraid will play some ill trick. Believe me, you had better come to an agreement. The Bonzes assure me, that the idol shall do what is reasonable on his part, provided you on your part do not carry things too high.

But the man, who was almost mad for the death of his daughter, did constantly protest, that he would sooner perish than relinquish his just rights. The sentence is given for me, said he, the idol fancied, that he might commit any sort of injustice without punishment, because he thought no body would be bold enough to take him to task; But he is not so safe as he thinks, and a little time will shew which of

us is the most wicked, and the most a devil of the two.

The viceroy could not now go back, and was fain therefore to grant a trial; he sent the case to the sovereign council at Peking, who remitted the trial to him again, he therefore subpoena'd the parties. The devil, who had but too many friends among all sorts of men, had also his share among the lawyers and proctors; those of them, to whom the Bonzes gave largely, found their cause good, and spoke with so much concern and vehemence, that the idol itself could not have pleaded better its own cause. Yet they had to deal with a subtle adversary, who had been beforehand with them, and had cleared the judge's understanding by a large bribe, being thoroughly persuaded, that the devil must be very cunning indeed, to withstand so clear an argument as this last was to the judges.

In short, after a great many hearings, the man carried his point. The idol was condemned to a perpetual banishment, as useless to the kingdom, and his temple was to be plucked down, and the Bonzes who represented him were severely chastised; they might notwithstanding apply themselves to the service of other spirits, to make themselves amends for the damage they had received for loving this.

Can any one who has not lost his senses adore gods of this character, weak, fearful, and whom one may affront safely? But alas! We may flatter ourselves that we are never so wise, yet how much is our wisdom distant from reason, when it is distant from the true faith.

Instead of coming hereby to a knowledge of the weakness of their gods, the people grow more and more blind every day. The Bonzes are above all obliged to keep up their credit and reputation, because of the advantage they make thereby. To bring this about the better, they make use of the following

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maxims of morality, which they take great care to
propagate.

We must not think, say they, that good and evil are as confused in the other world as they are in this; there are there rewards for the good, and punishments for the bad; which has occasioned different places to be set apart for the souls of men, according to every one's merit. The god Fo was the saviour of the world, he was born to teach the way of salvation, and to make expiation for all our sins.

He has left us ten commandments. The first forbids the killing of any living creature of what sort soever; the second commands not to take another man's goods; the third not to give up one's self to impurity; the fourth not to lye; and the fifth to drink no wine.

Besides these, they recommend to the people's practice several works of mercy. Entertain and nourish up, say they, the Bonzes; build them monasteries and temples, that their prayers and voluntary penances may obtain for you exemption from that punishment which your sins have deserved. Burn paper gilt and washed with silver, habits made of stuff and silk. All these in the other world shall be turned, into real gold and silver, and into true and substantial garments, which shall be given to your fathers faithfully, who will make use of them as they have occasion. If you do not regard these commands, you shall be after your death cruelly tormented, and exposed to several Metempsychoses or transmigrations; that is to say, you shall be born in the shape of rats, horses, mules, and all other creatures. This last point makes a great impression upon their minds.

I remember, that, being in the province of Xanli, I was sent for to christen a sick person. It was an old man of threescore and ten, who lived upon a small pension, which the emperor had given him. When I came into his chamber, O my good father, says he, how much am I obliged to you, who are going to

to deliver me from a great deal of torment. Baptism, answered I, does not only deliver from the torment of hell, but intitles us to the enjoyment of a place in paradise. O how happy will it be for you to go to heaven, eternally to live in the presence of God! I do not, said the sick man, understand what you mean, nor perhaps have I explained my meaning clearly to you; you know, father, I have lived a long time upon the emperor's bounty. The Bonzes, who are perfectly well acquainted with all the transactions of the other world, assure me, that I shall be obliged after my death, by way of recompense for my pension, to serve him, and that my soul will infallibly go into one of his post horses, to carry dispatches from court thro' all the province. They have therefore been advising me to mind my duty in that new state, not to stumble, nor kick, nor bite, nor otherwise hurt any one, run well, and eat little, and be patient, say they, and you may move the gods to compassion, who often, of a good beast, make at length a person of quality, or a considerable Mandarine. I protest, father, the very thoughts of it makes me quake, it never comes into my mind, but I tremble, yet I dream of it every night, and sometimes methinks in my sleep I am already in the harness, ready to run at the first jerk of the postilion. Then I wake in a great sweat, and half mad, scarcely knowing, whether I am a man or a horse. But, alas! What will be my sorrow when this will be no more a dream but a reality.

This therefore, father, is the course I took. They tell me, that those of your religion are not subject to those changes that men are always men, and are, in the other world, of the same kind as they are here. I beg of you therefore to receive me among you. I know your religion is hard to observe, yet, if it had ten times more difficulties, I am ready to embrace it, and, whatsoever trouble it put me to, I had rather be a christian than be turned into a beast. This dis-
course,

course, and the condition the man was in, wrought me into compassion; and afterwards considering with myself, that God makes use of ignorance and folly to bring men to the knowledge of the truth, I took an occasion from thence to undeceive him of his mistakes, and to lead him into the way of salvation. I instructed him a great while, at last he believed: and I had the comfort to see him die, not only with a clearer and better understanding of things, but farther with all the marks of a good christian.

In process of time, the superstitions of the people grew so numberless, that I do not believe any nation under the sun is so full of whimsies as China. The Mandarines are obliged to condemn all these sects as hereticks, as indeed they do in their books; but yet springing themselves mostly from idolatrous families, and having been instructed by the Bonzes, they in their practice follow the example of the common people.

Two of these Bonzes, seeing one day in a rich farmer's yard two or three large ducks, fell on their faces before the door, and sigh'd and wept grievously. The good woman, seeing them out of her chamber window, came down to see what was the occasion of their tears. We know, said they, that the souls of our fathers are transmigrated into those creatures, and the fear we are in, lest you should kill them, will without doubt go near to kill us: It is true, said the woman, we did intend to sell them, but, since they are your fathers, I promise you we will keep them.

This answer was not for the Bonzes purpose. But, continued they, perhaps your husband will not be so charitable, and then, if any accident should happen to them, you may be sure it will kill us. At last, after a long discourse, the good woman was so far moved with their pretended grief, that she gave them the ducks to look after for some time to comfort them. They took them with a great deal of respect, promising themselves twenty times to them; but that
very

Every evening they made an entertainment of them for some of their company, and fattened themselves with them.

A prince of the blood lost a young man for whom he had a particular love; a few years after he spoke of it with a great deal of warmth and concern to the Bonzes, who said to him: My lord, do not trouble yourself any more, your loss may be repair'd; he whom you grieve for is in Tartary, and his soul is passed into a young man's body; but there must be a great deal of money to find where he is, and you must give good presents to the priests of that country. This news pleased the prince mightily, so that he gave them what they desired; and a few months after they got a boy any where, and gave him to the prince instead of the boy who was dead. Thus it is, that the whole country, from the peasant to the prince, are bubbled by these ministers of iniquity.

If they can't thus trick people out of their money, they try to get it out of them by doing acts of penance publickly, which the people esteem them mightily for, and shew them a great deal of pity and compassion. I have seen them dragging after them a long chain of iron as thick as one's arm, about thirty feet long, fastened to the neck or legs. Thus it is, say they, at every door as they pass, that we expiate your faults, sure this deserves some small alms. Others in publick places knock their pates with all their force with large bricks, till they are almost covered with blood. They have several other penitential actions, but what I was most surpris'd at was this.

One day I met in the middle of a town a young Bonze of a good mien, a genteel and modest look, such as might easily move any one's compassion and charity. He stood upright in a sort of a sedan very close shut, the inside of which was like an harrow full of nails very thick, with their points sticking out towards the man in the chair, so that he could not bend either one way or t'other without wounding himself.

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self. Two fellows were hired to carry him from house to house, where he begg'd the people to have compassion on him.

He told them he was shut up in that chair for the good of their souls, and was resolv'd never to go out from thence till they had bought all the nails (of which there were above two thousand) at the rate of six-pence a-piece, of which nails, the very smallest he had would derive incomparable blessings on them and their families. If you buy any of them, you will do an action of heroick virtue, and your alms are not bestow'd on the Bonzes, to whom you may take other opportunities of bestowing your charity, but to the god Fo, in whose honour we are going to build a temple.

In the mean while I happen'd to pass thro' the street; the Bonze, seeing me, came and told me the same tale. I told him, that he was very unhappy to torment himself thus in this world for no good, and did counsel him therefore to come out of his prison, to go to the temple of the true God to be instructed in heavenly truths, and submit to penance less severe, but more wholesome. He was so far from being in a passion with me, that he answer'd me calmly and courteously, that he was much obliged to me for my good advice, and would be more obliged to me still, if I would buy a dozen of his nails, which would certainly make me have a good journey.

Here hold your hand, says he, turning on one side, take these; upon the faith of a Bonze they are the very best in all my sedan, for they prick me the most, yet you shall have them at the same rate at which I sell the others. He spoke those words in such a manner, as would have made me on any other occasion have laugh'd; but at that time his kindness rais'd my compassion, and I was strangely concerned to see that bondman of the devil suffer more to work out his own destruction, than a christian need do to

Yet all the Bonzes are not penitents: while some abuse the credulous by their hypocritical pretences, others get money out of them by magical arts, secret thefts, horrible murders, and a thousand detestable abominations, which modesty won't let me mention here. People, who are only outwardly religious, spare nothing to gratify their passions, and if they can but escape the justice of men, which in this place spares none who are caught wronging their neighbour, they care not what they do in the eyes of that God whom they will scarcely own.

Although the generality of the people are prejudiced in favour of them, yet the wiser sort are always upon their guard against these wretches, and the magistrates always take great notice of what they do in their monasteries. It happened a few years ago, that a governor of a town, passing with his train in the highway, saw a great company of people got together, and had the curiosity to send to know what was the occasion of their meeting there.

The Bonzes were solemnizing an extraordinary festival, they had set a machine upon a stage, at the top of which a young man put out his head over a little rail, which went all round the machine. The rail hid his arms and all his body, one could see nothing at liberty but his eyes, which he rolled about as if he was distracted. Below this machine an old Bonze appeared upon the stage, who told the people that the young man which they saw was going to sacrifice himself, according to custom, in this manner. There ran by the road side a deep river, into which he would presently throw himself headlong. He can't die, added the Bonze, if he would, because at the bottom of the river he will be received by charitable spirits, who will give him as good a welcome as he can desire, and indeed it is the greatest happiness that can possibly befall him, an hundred persons have desired to sacrifice themselves

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instead

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instead of him, but him we chose before the rest,
because of his zeal and other virtues.

When the Mandarin had heard this speech, he said, that the young man indeed had a great deal of courage, but he wonder'd much that he did not himself tell the people of this his resolution; let him come down a little, said he, that we may talk with him. The Bonze, who was confounded at this order, did all he could to hinder it, and did protest, that the whole sacrifice would be ineffectual if he spake a word, nay, if he did but open his mouth, and for his part he could not answer for the mischief such a thing would bring upon the province. For the mischief you talk of, replied the Mandarin, I'll be responsible; and then he commanded the young man to come down; he gave no other answer to these commands but hideous and frightful looks, and various distortions of his eyes, which almost started out of his head.

You may from hence, said the Bonze, judge what violence you offer him in commanding him down. He is already almost distracted, and if you continue your command you will make him die with grief. This did not make the Mandarin change his resolution, but he order'd some of his retinue to go up and bring him down. They found him tied and bound down on every side, with a gag in his mouth; and as soon as they had untied him and taken away the gag from the poor fellow's mouth, he cried out, as loud as he could bawl; Ah! my lord, revenge me against those assassins, who were going to drown me. I am a batchelor of arts, and was going to the court in Peking, to assist in the examinations there; yesterday a company of Bonzes seiz'd upon me violently, and this morning very early they bound me to this machine, taking from me all power of crying out or complaining, and intending to drown me this evening.

Evening, being resolv'd to accomplish their accus'd ceremonies at the expence of my life

When he Began to speak the Bonzes were marching off, but the officers of justice, who always attend the governors, stopp'd several of them The chief of them, who had pretended just before that the young man could not be drown'd, was himself immediately thrown into the river and drown'd, the others were carried to prison, and did after receive that punishment which they deserv'd

Since the Tartars have been emperors of China, the Lamas, another sort of Bonzes, have been establish'd there Their habit is different from those of China both in shape and colour, but their religion is the same with the Chinese, and they worship the god Fo; they differ from the Chinese only in a few particular superstitious practices These Lamas are chaplains to the Tartar nobility who live at Pekin, but in Tartary they themselves are the gods which the people worship

There it is that the god Fo has his most famous seat, where he appears under a sensible figure, and, as they say, never dies He is kept in a temple, and an infinite number of these Lamas serve him with an ineffable veneration, which they strive as much as they can to imprint upon the minds of all others whatsoever When he dies, for he is but a man placed there, they put in his room a Lama of the same stature, and, as near as they can, of the same features: that the people may be the better deceiv'd by it Thus the people of this country, and especially all strangers, are eternally babbl'd by these impostors

Among the different religions exercis'd in China, I do not think it worth while to mention to your highness a few Mahometans, who have liv'd for these six hundred years, in several provinces, and are never disturb'd, because they never disturb any one else upon the score of religion, being content to enjoy it

themselves, or to propagate it there among their kindred by marriages. However, it may be of use to tell you of a third sect, which is the religion, or philosophy, or policy of some of the learned*, for one cannot tell by what name to call this doctrine, which is so obscure, that the very professors of it scarce understand what they teach, they call it in their language *Iukio*, and is a sect of learned men.

That you may understand what I am going to tell you, you must know that civil wars, magick, and idolatry having put the empire into confusion for many ages, the love of learning was quite cashier'd, and there were found few doctors, who could by their writings awaken the minds of men out of that lethargy into which ignorance and corruption of manners had lull'd them, only, about 1070*, some creditable expounders were found, and, in 1200, one doctor did distinguish himself from all others, for his extraordinary understanding, by his example they began by degrees to take some pleasure in reading ancient books, which they had before thrown aside.

Lastly, in the year 1400, the emperor, being willing to stir up in his subjects a love of learning, made choice of fourscore and two of the most ingenious doctors, whom he commanded to compile a system agreeable to the sentiments of the ancient writers, which might serve as a direction for the learned hereafter. The Mandarines, who had the commission, set themselves diligently to work, but being prejudiced with those opinions which idolatry had diffused all over China, instead of following the true sense of the ancients, they tried, by false glosses and interpretations, to distort the words and sayings of the ancients to their prejudicate opinions.

They spake of God as nothing different from nature itself, that is, from that power, energy, or natural virtue which did produce, and put in order, all the

the parts of the world, and which does still keep them that in order. He is, say they, a most pure and most perfect principle, he is the source of all things, and the essence of all beings, and that which constitutes the formal difference of every thing. They made use of those magnificent expressions of the ancients, that they might seem to keep to their doctrine, but indeed they raised new opinions, because they understand hereby I can't tell what sort of insensible soul of the world, which they imagine spread thro' matter, upon which it produces the several mutations we see. This is not that supreme Emperor of heaven, all just and all powerful, the chief of all creatures. In their works nothing is found but a better sort of atheism, and a licentious freedom from the worship of God.

But, whether it was because they were unwilling to express themselves plainly, or did accidentally make use of expressions of a larger signification than their meaning, yet they talk of Heaven as did the ancients, and ascribe to nature almost all those perfections which we attribute to God. They tolerate willingly the Mahometans, because like them they adore the Master and King of Heaven. They persecute all other sects with great violence, which at court they took up a resolution utterly to abolish throughout the whole empire.

Yet many reasons persuaded them from putting this resolution in practice, the chief of which were these, even several among the learned were dissenters from this new establish'd doctrine, for they could not shake off the prejudices they had suck'd in. Besides all the people were wholly bias'd in favour of idols, so that their temples could never be pull'd down, but insurrections and disturbances must necessarily ensue. They were therefore contented to adjudge at Peking all the other sects hereticks

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(which they still do every year) without setting themselves effectually to stop the practice of them.

These new books composed by their most learned men, and honour'd by the emperor's own approbation, were greedily received by every body. Some lik'd them, because they destroy'd all sort of religion, and these make up the greatest number of this sect. Others approv'd of them, because the religion which they contain'd was so very little, that it cost them no pains nor trouble to practise it; and thus was the sect of the learned form'd, of whom one may justly say, they honour God with their mouth and with their lips, for they often say, that we must adore and obey Heaven; but their hearts are distant from him, seeing they explain those words in such a sort as destroys the very being of God, and stifles all sense of religion.

Thus this people, so wise heretofore, so full of knowledge, and (if I may use the expression) of the spirit of God, are now in these last days miserably fallen into superstition, magick, paganism; and lastly, into atheism itself, falling by degrees, story by story, till they come to the very bottom of the building; becoming thereby enemies to that reason which they had so constantly follow'd, and abominable to that very nature to which they now give such high encomiums.

This is, my lord, an account of the present state of China, with respect to the several religions therein use; for, as for the political honours which they pay to Confucius, they are not divine worship, and the palaces, which are call'd by his name, are not temples, but houses for learned men to assemble in. I was unwilling to particularize their ceremonies, their opinions, and their morals; besides that it would be tedious and endless, it is very difficult to give a certain account of them; because the Bonzes do every day invent new whimsies, and, if they can but live at other people's charge by abusing them, they do not value

value whether they exactly follow the doctrine of their predecessors, which is in effect neither better nor freer from absurdities than their own.

Nothing now remains, but that I give your eminence an account to which of these sects, which divide the kingdom, the emperor is most inclinable. This prince, who is naturally wise and politick, has always kept in with the people. As he is upon a throne which the least blast may shake, he endeavours, as much as he can, to strengthen it by his people's love; he is so far from provoking them, that he makes himself very popular, yet not to such a degree as his father did, lest he should bring upon himself the Mandarines hatred; yet much more than did the ancient emperors, to the end, that he may as much as possible sweeten that yoke, which a new government has put on their shoulders.

He does therefore permit, or rather tolerate superstition; he pays a great deal of respect to several Bonzes of the first rank, who have behaved themselves well in any of the provinces, or at court; nay, he does his own temper that violence as to let some of them live in his palace, those whom the princess his mother had before brought and establish'd there: but, tho' he thus favours their persons, he is no slave to their opinions. He perfectly understands the folly of them, and does upon several occasions laugh at those things which they enjoin for principles of religion, as extravagancies and fables. He often sends those who speak to him of them to the missionaries: *Hear, says he, those fathers who reason so well, I am sure they will not be of your mind.* One day he said to father Verbiest, his mathematician, *Why do not you speak of God as we do? People would be less set against your religion. You call him Tien-tchu*, and we call him Cham-ti. Is it not the same thing? Will you leave the use of a good word because*

Z 4

people

*Tien-tchu signifies Lord of Heaven. Cham ti Sovereign Emperor.

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people give false interpretations of it? My lord, said
the father, I know that your majesty does follow
the old doctrine of China, which several doctors
have forsaken: and, if we should use their words, they
would fancy we believe as they believe; but if your
majesty will by a proclamation publickly declare that
the word Cham-ti signifies the same in effect, that the
christians mean by Tien-tchu, we are ready to make use
of any one of them as soon as the other. He liked
the father's answer, but reasons of state hinder'd
him from following his advice.

When the queen-mother was dead, those, who
had the care of the funeral committed to them, in-
formed the prince that it was necessary, according
to ancient custom, to pull down part of the palace-
wall, that the body might be carried thro' the breach;
because that the royal family would be exposed to a
great many misfortunes, if the body was carried thro'
the ordinary passages. *You do not talk rationally,* said
the emperor to them, *your heads are full of whimsies.*
What folly is it to think my good or bad fortune depends
upon the way by which my mother goes to her tomb;
It was my unhappiness to lose her, and to fear any mis-
fortune, after so great a loss, would be to dishonour her
after her death, by superstitious rites and ridiculous ce-
remonies. Some time after several maids of honour to
the empress came and fell at the emperor's feet, and
begg'd with tears, that he would suffer them, who
had serv'd the empress here, to follow her into the
other world, where their services might be needful
to her. He said to them: *I have taken care of that*
already, you need not therefore put yourselves to farther
trouble about it. And, for fear lest a cruel zeal might
prompt them to lay violent hands on themselves, he
commanded their hair to be immediately cut off, and
that they should be confin'd. When they are shav'd,
they fancy themselves useless, and unfit to serve per-
sons of quality in the other world.

These

These examples are enough to let us see, that the emperor is very far from giving himself up to all these popular extravagancies. He honours Confucius as the first and wisest philosopher in the world, in several things he follows custom, when he judges it much for his interest, at certain times of the year he offers sacrifices in the temples, according to ancient practice, yet he says, it is only in honour of the Cham ti, and that he adores no other but the supreme Lord of the universe. Thus far the instructions of the missionaries have work'd upon him. He believes in one God, but state reasons, and the gratification of his passions, which are opposite to the spirit of Jesus Christ, have never suffered him to open his eyes to the truth of the gospel. The rigidity and severity of morals, which this requires, oftentimes stops the most resolute, and we see every day persons in the world, who have a greatness of soul enough to deserve the name of Heroes, who do yet want courage when they ought to behave themselves as those who bear that of Christians.

Nevertheless, this prince would not have any one think that he rejects our religion for want of courage. He told his mind to father Verbiest one day in these words. *Your law is hard, yet, whatever difficulty was to be undergone, I should not stick one minute to be of it, were I convinced of the truth of it. If I was once a christian, I am pretty well satisfied that in three or four years the whole empire would be so too. For I am their master.* We might have some hopes from these sentiments of the prince, if we were not on the other side persuaded, that the love of pleasure, and the fear of giving occasion to some revolution in the empire, were not almost invincible hindrances to his conversion.

But who can find out the Almighty's designs? And who has hitherto penetrated into the mysteries of his eternal councils? Are 'not the hearts of the greatest princes as well as of the meanest people in his keeping? it is from that Almighty hand that all our hopes are which has already confounded an infinite number of idols, and overthrown many of their temples; it has made viceroy, ministers of state, princes, and one empress submit to the yoke of christianity. ' The more the conversion of the emperor requires miracles, the more worthy it is of the great power and infinite goodness of God, who is called Great for no other reason than for the great and mighty things which he hath done.

Thus, my lord, if Europe continues to send into China fervent and deyout missionaries, we may hope, that God will vouchsafe to make use of their zeal for the accomplishment of this great work. I am, in the most profound manner,

My Lord,

Your Eminence's most obedient

and most humble Servant.



LETTER XI.

To Monsieur Rouillié, Counsellor of State in Ordinary.

Of the Establishment and Progress of the Christian Religion in China.

Sir,

THE ardent zeal, which you have always shewed towards establishing and promoting the christian religion in China, makes me hope, that you will be pleased with the letter which I now take the boldness to write to you. You will not only read therein those things which I have already had the honour, to discourse with you so often about, but also many other useful remarks, which I hope may be worthy your curiosity and attention.

It will, without doubt, bring you a great deal of comfort, by shewing you, that your care, your prayers, and your bounty have been seconded by Heaven; and that, in contributing so much as you have done to the conversion of so many souls, you will at the end of the world be accounted a father of many faithful.

But, in spite of all that I can say, you will not be made sensible of the great good you do there, for it is with the greatest difficulty that you are brought to believe you do good: you will at least see, that the fervent missionaries, who for more than an age have laboured in the large field of the gospel, are not altogether unworthy their employment; and that the fruits, which they gather there, should be an encouragement to all Europe, to perfect this great work, which, by them has been so happily begun.

Among

Among other things which the emperor objected against us, when discoursing of the christian religion, this was none of the weakest. If the knowledge of Jesus Christ, says he sometimes, is necessary for salvation, and if God desires the salvation of all men, why has he so long kept us in ignorance and error? It is now above sixteen ages since your religion, the only way men have to obtain salvation, has been established in the world; we knew nothing of it here. Is China so inconsiderable as not to deserve to be thought of, while so many barbarous nations have been enlightened?

The missionaries have very solidly answered this objection, and that with so good a face of reason, as did give ample satisfaction to the emperor. I do not, here tell you, sir, their answer; you do yourself know all that could be possibly said thereto. But perhaps it will not be tedious to you to let you know, that China has not been so much neglected as it thinks. We cannot inform ourselves of all that has passed in this new world since the death of our Saviour; for the Chinese histories seldom speak of any thing but what concerns political government: yet the Divine Providence would be sufficiently justified in this point, if it had acted for the salvation of China no more than has come to our knowledge.

There is no doubt but St. Thomas preached the true faith in the Indies, and it is as certain, that the Indians had then great dealings with the Chinese, to whom almost all India was tributary. It is therefore very probable, that this apostle, to whom the care of this new world was committed, did not neglect the best part of it, which was then as much distinguished above the rest of the eastern part, as Italy was above the western in the most flourishing condition of the Roman empire; so that perhaps he himself travelled there, or at least sent some of his followers.

This

This conjecture which carries its own evidence with it, does still receive confirmation, from what the Chinese histories relate concerning those times. Their history says, that a man came into China and preached heavenly doctrine. He was not an ordinary man, adds the history, his life, his miracles, and his virtues made him admired by all the world. Furthermore, one may read in an ancient breviary of the church of Malabar, wrote in Chaldee, these words, which are in the office for St. Thomas's day. *It was by St. Thomas's means, that the Chinese and Ethiopians were converted and came to the knowledge of the truth* And in another place, *It was by St. Thomas, that is to say, by the preaching of St. Thomas, that the kingdom of heaven went into the empire of China.* And in an anthem we read these words which follow: *The Indies, China, Persia, &c. offer up, in memory of St. Thomas, the worship due to thy holy name.* We cannot tell what conversions he wrought there, nor how long religion flourished; but this is certain, that, if religion hath not been kept up in China till now, the Chinese may thank themselves, who, by a criminal neglect and voluntary stubbornness, did so easily part with the gift of God.

Neither is this the only time wherein our Lord hath visited them. A great while after, that is, in the seventh century, a catholick patriarch of the Indies sent missionaries thither, who preached the true religion with good success. Altho' their history hath mentioned something of this, yet it is done in so few words, and in so careless and obscure a manner, that we should never have had the happiness of being thoroughly acquainted with this mission, were it not for an accident which happened a few years ago, which it pleased God to bring about, for the stronger establishing the faith in this great empire

In the year 1625, some masons digging near Sigan, the capital of the province of Xensi, found a long table of marble which had been heretofore erected as a monument in the manner they build them in China, and which time had buried in the ruins of some building, or had hid in the ground; so that no remains of it were visible. This stone, which was ten feet long and six feet broad, was very nicely examined; the more for this reason, because on the top of it there was a large cross handsomely engraved, below which, was a long discourse in Chinese characters, and other letters which the Chinese did not understand; they were Syriac characters. The emperor had notice of it, and had a copy of it sent him, and did command, that the monument should be carefully kept in a Pagode*, where it now is, about a mile from Sigan. The substance of the inscription on the table is as follows:

‘ There is a first principle of all things, of a
 ‘ spiritual and intelligent nature; who created all
 ‘ things out of nothing, and who subsists in three
 ‘ persons. At man’s creation, he endued him with
 ‘ original justice, made him king of the universe,
 ‘ and master of his own passions; but the devil,
 ‘ drawing him into temptation, corrupted his mind,
 ‘ and disturbed the inward peace and innocence of
 ‘ his heart. Hence sprang all those misfortunes
 ‘ which overwhelm human kind, and all those dif-
 ‘ ferent factions into which we are crumbled.

‘ Mankind, who since that fatal fall did always
 ‘ walk in darkness, would never have found out
 ‘ the path of truth, if one of these three persons
 ‘ of the Divinity had not taken upon him the
 ‘ nature of man, which man, we call the Messiah.
 ‘ An angel proclaimed his coming, and some time
 ‘ after he was born of a virgin in Judea. This mi-
 ‘ raculous

* An idol’s temple.

‘ faculous birth was^o set forth by a new star in the heavens, Some kings, who observed the star, came and offered presents to the Divine Infant, that so the law and predictions of the twenty four prophets might be accomplished

‘ He governed the world, by instituting a very plain, spiritual, and heavenly law He establish’d eight beatitudes He endeavoured to dissuade men from setting their hearts on the good things of this world, in order to ~~fix~~ in them a love of those good things which will never fail He set forth the beautifulnes of the three principal virtues . He set open the gates of heaven to the just, to which place he himself ascended at mid-day, leaving on earth twenty-seven books of his doctrine, proper for the conversion of the world

He instituted baptism for the washing away sin, and laid down his life on the cross for all men without exception His ministers cut not off their beards, but have their heads shaved, excepting a circle of hair which they leave on They have no servants, for they make themselves superior to none, whether in the height of prosperity, or in the depth of affliction In stead of heaping up riches, they willingly impart their little all to those who are in want They fast, both for mortification of themselves, and in observance of the laws They reverence their superiors, and honour all good men They pray seven times a day for the dead and the living They offer sacrifice every week to purge them from their sins, and to purify their hearts

‘ Even kings, who follow not this law, whatsoever they do, can never make themselves truly estimable among men In the reign of Tai Tsoum, a most wise and honoured prince, Olopouen coming from Judea, after a long course of dangers by sea and land, at last arrived at China

in the year of our Lord 636 The emperor, having notice of it, sent a Colao to meet him in the suburbs of the imperial city, with orders to conduct him to the palace When he came there, his law was examined, and the truth of it acknowledged, so that the emperor, in favour of him, made the following edict

No particular name comprehends the true law, neither are the saints fixed to one place, they are scattered thro' the whole world, that they may be universally useful A man of Judea, of exemplary virtue, is arrived at our court we have examined his doctrine, and found it admirable, with no mixture of pride, and built upon those principles which suppose the world had a beginning This law teaches the way of salvation, and cannot but be extremely useful to all our subjects I therefore judge it necessary, that it be taught them Afterwards, he commanded that a church should be built, and nominated one and twenty persons to serve that cure

Kao, the son of Tai çoum, succeeded him in the year 651, and endeavoured to make that religion flourish which his father had received He highly honoured the bishop of Olopouen, and built in all the provinces churches for the true God, so that the Bonzes some years after, being alarmed at the progress which christianity had made, used all means to stop the course of it

The persecution was great, and the number of the faithful grew small, when our Lord raised up two persons of extraordinary zeal, who defended the faith with so much vigour, that in a little time it recovered its former lustre The emperor on his part strove to confirm it more and more, even so far, as to command five kings to go to church, and prostrate themselves before the altar, and to erect other churches in several

several towns to the honour of the God of the christians. Thus the foundation, shook by the struggle which the Bonzes made, became more solid and better fixed than ever.

In the mean while the prince himself continued to give great signs of his piety, he made the pictures of his predecessors be carried to church, he offered himself an hundred pieces of silk upon the altars, paid mighty respect to Ki-ho, a missionary newly arrived out of Judea, and all his lifetime omitted nothing that was necessary for the propagating the gospel in his dominions. Venmun, who succeeded him in the year 757, inherited his virtue as well as crown. He built five churches. He was famous for his other greater qualities as well as for his care of religion.

The following emperors confirmed christianity by their edicts and examples. We can pray for them without fearing that our prayers will not be heard, for they were humble and peaceable, they bore with the faults of their neighbours, and did good to all sorts of men. Which is the true character of christianity, and is the true way to make peace and plenty flow into the greatest kingdoms.

Others of them were exercised in the works of the brightest charity. The emperor So tcoum offered at the altar, and built churches, besides he assembled together the priests of four churches, and for forty days served them himself with great respect, he fed the poor, clothed the naked, healed the sick, and buried the dead. It is to keep up the memory of their great actions, and to let posterity know the present state of the christian religion here, that we have erected this monument in the year 782.

This, sir, is a faithful epitome of what is remarkable in this famous reman of Chinese antiquity. The Bonzes, who keep it in one of their temples near Si

gan, have erected, over-against it, a long table of marble every way like it, with encomiums upon the gods of the country, to diminish as much as they can the glory which the christian religion receives from thence. The chronicle of China confirms, by the order and succession of the emperors, what the monument says of it; but I am apt to think, that the virtues of those emperors mentioned therein are exalted too much, some of whom, in history, are said to have done as much for paganism, as this says they did for christianity. However that be, it is a plain testimony, that the faith was preached there, and received by a great many persons. It flourished there at least an hundred fourscore and six years; and perhaps much longer, for we have no account of its failure, for the very memory of it was lost; and, when the new missionaries of our society came thither, they found no sign or footstep of it.

It was in the year 1552, that saint Xavier went thither in hopes to add this new conquest to the kingdom of Jesus Christ. It seemed that great man had made but an essay in the Indies, and, if I may use the expression, had but served an apprenticeship to that zeal, which he would be perfect master of in China. And surely Moses never had a more ardent desire to enter into the Holy Land, to gather with his people the temporal riches of that country, than this apostle longed to carry into this new world the treasures of the gospel. Both one and t'other died by the providence of God, in a time when their long voyages and infinite labours seemed answered by a great probability of success.

The scripture tells us, Moses's death was a punishment to him for his lack of faith; St. Xavier's seems to be a reward for the abundance of his. God had a mind to reward his zeal, his labours, and his charity; and was willing to defer, for a time, that torrent of mercy, which he designed for the empire of China.

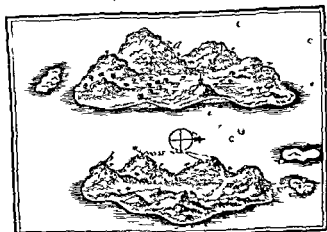
China, that he might reward his servant with that glory, which he had procured for so many nations. He died in the isle of Sancheu, or as we speak it, Sancian, under the jurisdiction of the province of Canton; it is well known, that he lay in the ground several months, all which time God preserved him from the usual corruption; from hence he was carried to Goa, where, from that time, he hath been honoured as the protector of that place, and the apostle of the East.

The touch of his body consecrated the place of his burial. That island became not only a famous place, but also an Holy Land. Even the heathen honoured it, and fled thither, as to a city of refuge. In the mean time pirates haunted those coasts, that no vessels dared to go thereabouts; so that the place, where this sacred tomb lay, was quite unknown to the Europeans, and it is but a little while ago, that they discovered it by a particular accident.

In the year 1688, a Portuguese vessel which, coming from Goa, had on-board the governor of Macao, was seized by a sudden gust of wind, and forced to let the ship drive towards these islands, do what they could. They cast anchor between the isles of Sancian and Lampacao, which were so near one another, as to make a kind of haven. Contrary winds, continuing eight days, gave father Caroccio a jesuit, who was on board, an opportunity of satisfying his devout resolutions. He went on shore, and was resolved, in spite of danger, to go in search of the saint's tomb. The pilot and most part of the sailors followed him, and they searched the whole island, but to no purpose.

At last a Chinese, an inhabitant of the place, imagining with himself, what it was which they so ardently sought after, undertook to guide them, and led them to a place which all the inhabitants revered, and where he himself began to perform

actions and gestures of piety. The father, who could not understand him, began to search about for some sign or mark of the sepulchre, and found at last a stone five cubits long, and three broad, upon which were cut these words in Latin, Portuguese, Chinese, and Japonnese, *Here Xavier, a man truly apostolical, was buried.* Then they all fell on their knees, and did with devotion kiss that earth, which the tears and the last groans of that apostle had sanctified. The inhabitants of the place came in and followed the example of the Portuguese: even the English, for one of their vessels came to an anchor in the same place, came thither to honour the saint, and prayed a great while at his tomb. Father Caroccio some time after said mass in his Pontificalibus, while the two vessels, the English and Portuguese, did several times discharge their artillery, and gave marks of their common joy.



*the Isle of Sancian, or Lampacao, is the Place
of the Tomb of Saint Xavier*

Lastly, to preserve the memory of that holy place, they resolved to build a good square wall all round the tomb, and to dig a ditch to secure it from all inundations. In the midst, between these walls, ~~they~~ raised the stone which they found overturned, and built an altar, as a memorial of the august sacrifice of the eucharist, which had been offered up there, which might also serve to celebrate it upon again, if either accident or devotion should carry the ministers of Jesus Christ thither any more. The people of the place did themselves assist towards the carrying on this little work, and shewed as much zeal for the honour of the saint as the Christians did.

This place is of itself very pleasant. You see there a small plain extended from the bottom of a hill, on one side of which is a wood, on the other are gardens cultivated, a rivulet, which turns and twines about, renders the island very fertile. It is not uninhabited, as some have wrote, there are seven teen villages in it. The land is manured, even the very mountains, and the inhabitants are so far from wanting the necessaries of life, that the growth of their island is enough to carry on such commerce as yields them a moderate plenty.

You will easily pardon me, sir, for this short digression concerning St Francis Xavier. A missionary can't speak of him, without being naturally inclined to enlarge about every thing that concerns this great man. It was he, who settled upon a solid foundation all the missions into the Indies, and who, in the last years of his life, encouraged his brethren to enterprize the great design of the conversion of China. His zeal passed into their minds and hearts, and, tho' every body but Xavier thought it impossible that the design should take effect, the fathers Roger, Pasio, and Ricci, all three Italians, did resolve to spend all their pains, and, if it were necessary, all their blood in this great work.

The difficulties, which the devil raised, did not discourage them. They enter'd one after the other into the southern provinces. The novelty of their doctrine brought them auditors, and the sanctity of their lives made those auditors have a favourable opinion of them. At first they heard them with pleasure, and afterwards with admiration. Father Ricci, above all, distinguished himself by his zeal and understanding; for he was thoroughly instructed in the customs, the religion, laws, and ceremonies of the country, all which he had studied a long time before at Macao. He spoke their language fluently, and understood their writings perfectly; this was joined to a sweet, easy, complaisant temper, and a certain insinuating behaviour, which none but himself had, which it was hard to resist; but above all, an ardour which the Holy Ghost instils into the workmen of the Lord's harvest; all this, I say, got him the repute of a great man and an apostle.

Not but that he met with a great many rubs in the work of God. The devil overthrew his designs more than once. He had the superstition of the people, the jealousy of the Bonzes, and the ill humour of the Mandarines to deal with; all which violently opposed what he was about to establish. Yet he never gave over; and God gave him perseverance, a virtue very necessary in the beginning such enterprises as these, which always meet with opposition, and which men of the best intentions in the world sometimes let fall, discouraged for want of present success to fortify them in the prosecution of their design.

Father Ricci, after many years fruitless labour, had, at last, the comfort of seeing the gospel flourish. He made many and mighty conversions in the province. The Mandarines themselves opened their eyes to the light of our holy faith, which our missionary carried even almost as far as to the court. The
emperor,

emperor Vanli, then reigning, received him with great marks of respect and kindness, and, among divers European curiosities, which the father presented to *J. A.* he was so taken with some pictures of our Saviour and the Virgin Mary, that he ordered them to be set up in a high place in his palace, as things to which he would have a respect shewn

This kind welcome from the emperor gained him the good will of all the lords at court, and, in spite of the opposition of some magistrates, who, according to their custom, could not deal handsomely by a stranger, he bought an house at Peking, and gained such a foundation and establishment there, as hath been since the support of all the missions into this empire

Religion was by this means known (and without it, it would have been impossible to have supported it,) thus it came into esteem, and was preached by the new missionaries, who made great advantage of father Ricci's first labours. The court and all the provinces resounded every where with that adorable name*, which the Jews heretofore, thro' the respect they bore to it, never so much as pronounced to their proselytes, and which the new converted Chinese named to their countrymen with a respect yet greater, for the European workmen being but few, gave an opportunity to several Mandarines, to preach the gospel, and there were some of them who by their zeal and ~~standing~~ *standing* promoted the affairs of religion as much as the most fervent missionaries.

It is true, that these successes were some time after interrupted, for it is the character of truth, that it makes itself enemies, and the lot of the christian religion always to be persecuted. Providence being desirous to try the fidelity of these new christians, and to re inflame the zeal of their ministers, permit

ted the idol priests to oppose the preaching of the gospel, so that it very near came to pass, that a cabal of some Bonzes, supported by several Mandarines, had, by the destruction of father Ricci, overthrown in one minute the work of several years.

But the greatest danger to this holy man and his mission came from his own brethren, I mean the European christians. Some Portuguese of Macao, incensed against the jesuits, resolved to destroy them in China, altho' with them they destroyed the christian religion there. They could not but know what the holy intentions of those fathers were in going thither, yet they accused them as spies, who, under pretence of preaching the gospel, secretly managed a conspiracy, and had a design to seize upon China by the force and assistance of the Japonnese, Hollanders, and christians of that country.

It must needs be a great amazement to any one, who observes the rage and bitterness of these false brethren, who, altho' engaged by their religion to propagate the work of God even with the loss of their lives, were yet resolved to destroy it by such vile and false aspersions.

This ridiculous story, which was set forth with heat and violence, and built upon some circumstances which carried some show of truth, easily found credit among the Chinese, naturally excessively suspicious, and very well satisfied by a long experience, that the least commotions or rebellion might bring the most powerful empires to ruin.

The persecution was very sharp, the weak christians were scandalized, and disaffected from the faith. Father Martinez was taken up, imprisoned, and bastinado'd, till at length he died thro' his torments. And, if this accusation of the christians had ever come to the knowledge of the court, it is very probable it would have been the utter overthrow of christianity here. But our Lord stopp'd the growth.

ing evil in its bud, and, by the means of a Mandarin, a particular friend of father Ricci, gave peace to the mission, and liberty to the evangelical workmen.

After having surmounted a great many obstacles of this nature, and preached the gospel to an infinite number of people, this fervent missionary died. The heathens judged him the wisest and most understanding man of his age, the christians loved him as their father, and the preachers of the gospel made him a model whereby to form themselves. He had the satisfaction of dying in the midst of a plentiful harvest, but was disturbed, that there were so few workmen to get it in, so that he recommended nothing more earnestly to his brethren, who assisted him in his last sickness, than to receive with all imaginable joy and comfort all those who should come to partake of their labours. *If they find,* says he to them, *when they arrive here, crosses from the enemies of christianity, do you sweeten the bitternefs of them, by demonstrations of the most tender friendship, and most inflamed charity.*

The churches of China, of which he was the main support, were shaken by his fall, for altho' the emperor for some years afterwards shewed himself somewhat favourable to the christian religion, yet, in 1615, there arose against it the cruellest tempest that it had ever yet suffered. It was occasioned by one of the principal Mandarines of Nankin*. They chiefly set upon the pastors, thereby the easier to disperse the flock. Some were cruelly beaten, others banished, almost all imprisoned, and carried afterwards to Macao, after having the honour of suffering a thousand injuries and reproaches for the love of Jesus Christ.

The tempest lasted near six years, but at last the persecutor, being himself accused, was, by God's

judgment, deprived both of his offices and also of his life. His death gave the christians some respite, who, after that, multiplied more than ever, thro' the labours of a great many missionaries. It was about this time †, that the right reverend fathers of the order of St. Dominick joined with us; many of whom do at this time labour in China with a great deal of zeal and success.

About this time father Adam Schaal, a German, appeared at court, and added a new lustre to christianity, which had but newly sprang up again. He was perfectly skilled in mathematticks, and made use of his knowledge therein to obtain the emperor's kindness; he was, in a little time, so highly in the emperor's favour, that he thought he should be able, by his own interest alone, to establish the christian religion solidly. He began to make use of his interest with good success, when an insurrection overturned the whole government, and with it all his promising hopes.

This great state, whose power seemed to be enough to secure it from the most violent shock whatever, was made sensible then, that there is nothing constant in this world. Some robbers being met together, by the access of multitudes of malecontents, who joined them, formed vast armies: they burned towns, and plundered whole provinces. China presently changed its aspect, and, from the most flourishing empire, became the stage for the most bloody war. Never were there seen so many murders and barbarities. The emperor, being surpris'd at Peking, strangled himself for fear of falling into the hands of the victors. The usurper was soon drove out of the throne by the Tartars, who seiz'd upon it. The princes of the blood, who in different places were proclaimed emperors, were vanquished or killed. Then all the Mandarines rose,

some declaring for Tartary, others for liberty: others only carried on the fighting trade, in hopes to make their private fortunes from the publick ruin.

Some of those last were rather monsters than men, who giving themselves to all that licentiousness, which the most inhuman cruelty and barbarity could prompt them to, made whole provinces desolate, and shed more blood to satisfy their brutality, than the most ambitious prince in the world would for the conquest of an empire.

Religion, which groaned amidst those troubles, had the comfort nevertheless of seeing many great persons converted; one empress with her son were baptised; scarce either of them lived after their reception of the faith, the fruits of which they could not enjoy but in the other world. Lastly, the Tartars by their valour, and by a conduct equal to the policy of ancient Rome, made themselves masters of China, and, in a few years, obliged all the provinces to submit to a foreign yoke.

Then we thought religion's case desperate; but God, who needs not the assistance of men, when he hath a mind to support his own work, inspired on a sudden this new prince with a greater affection for the christian religion, than we dared hope for from the Chinese emperors. He not only took away the government of the mathematicks from the Mahometans, which they had possessed for 300 years, and gave it to father Adam; but by a special privilege he suffered that father to apply himself to him immediately in all things, which concerned the missionaries, without first passing thro' the formalities of the courts of justice, who are very severe to strangers. This signal favour, joined with many others, raised up the courage of the christians, and gave the heathens greater liberty to close with the true religion. Many persons of the best quality at Pekin desired baptism; the provinces follow'd the example of

of the court, and the harvest became so plentiful, that the workmen were too few to gather it in.

Those, who were employed therein, laboured with such an hearty zeal, that we do at this present feel the effects of it. There were found persons of eminent virtue, prudence, and understanding, whom God had formed during the troubles and civil wars, and which the Spirit of the Almighty drew out of the chaos, like so many stars, to shed forth the light of the gospel, unto the most hidden parts of this vast empire, accompanying their preaching with signs and wonders.

Among those extraordinary men, father Faber, a Frenchman, distinguished himself above the rest. I had the happiness to tarry some time in that province, which was allotted to his care; and I have, after so many years, found the precious remains there, which are the necessary consequences of holiness. Those, who were witnesses of his actions, tell to their children the miracles which he wrought to confirm them in their faith; and, altho' one need not believe all which they relate of him, we cannot nevertheless deny, that God did in many occasions give an extraordinary concurrence in several great things which he enterprised for his glory.

It is worth knowing after what manner he founded the mission of Hanchum, a town of the first rank in Xensi, two days journey distant from the capital. He was invited thither by a Mandarin, and a small number of christians, which he found there, made him the more laborious to increase their number. God put into his hands a means of doing this which he never expected. One of the great boroughs, which in China are as big as the towns, was then over-run by a prodigious multitude of locusts, which eat up all the leaves of the trees, and gnawed the grass to the very roots.

The inhabitants, after having used all imaginable means, thought fit to apply themselves to father Faber, whose repute was every where talked of. The father took from thence an occasion to explain the principal mysteries of our faith, and added, that, if they would submit themselves thereto, they should not only be delivered from the present plague, but that also they should obtain innumerable blessings, and eternal happiness. They embraced it willingly, and the father, to keep his word with them, marched in ceremony into the highways, in his stole and his surplice, and sprinkled up and down holy water, accompanying his action with the prayers of the church; but especially with a lively faith. God heard the voice of his servant, and the next day all the insects disappeared.

But the people, whose minds were wholly bent upon the things of this world, as soon as they saw themselves delivered, neglected the counsel which the missionary had given them. They were therefore immediately punished, and the plague grew worse than it was before. Then they accused one the other of their want of faith, they ran in crowds to the father's house, and casting themselves at his feet. We will not rise up, father, said they, till you have pardoned us. We confess our fault, and protest, that, if you will a second time deliver us from this affliction with which Heaven threatens us, the whole borough will immediately acknowledge your God, who alone can work such great miracles.

The father, to increase their faith, made them beg a great while. At last, inspired as before, he sent up his prayer, and sprinkled his holy water, and by the next day there was not an insect to be found in the fields. Then the whole borough, being brought over to the truth, followed the guidance of God's holy Spirit, they were all instructed and formed into a church, which, tho' it was abandoned for some years,

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is still reckoned one of the devoutest missions in China.

They say also of this father, that he has been carried over rivers thro' the air, that they have seen him in an extasy, that he foretold his own death; and did several other such wonders; but the greatest miracle of all was his life, which he spent in the continual exercise of all the apostolical virtues, in a profound humility, in a severe mortification, in a settled patience, proof against all sorts of injuries, in a flaming charity, and a tender devotion to the Mother of God, all which he practised to his death; to the edification, and, I may say, the admiration even of the idolaters.

While christianity spread its root deep throughout the provinces, it flourish'd every day more and more at Pekin; the emperor did not seem far from it. He came often to our church, and did there adore the divine Majesty in such an humble manner, as would have been commendable in a christian. There are still writings from his own hand, wherein he acknowledges the beauty and the purity of our holy law; but a heart set upon sensual pleasures can never follow the directions of the Spirit. When father Adam has been pressing upon him: *You are, said he, in the right; but how can you expect that any one should be able to praise all these laws? Take away two or three of the difficultest, and, after that, perhaps we may agree to the rest.* Thus this young prince, divided between the voice of human nature and grace, thought, that we might favour nature at the expence of religion; but the father gave him to understand, that we were only the publishers, not the authors of the gospel. Nevertheless, my lord, says the father to him one day, tho' we propose to the corrupt world a body of morals, which surpass their former comply with, and mysteries which are above their reason to comprehend, we do not from thence despair to have

him speak upon his knees, but, raised him up, and heard his last advice with somewhat less prejudice against it than usual, ordered him afterwards a present of tea, and dismissed him with such marks of tenderness as touched him to the bottom of his soul, of which he was the more sensible, because he never could bring it about, to work in him a true conversion.

His death was equally fatal to the Bonzes, who were thereupon driven from the palace, and to the true religion, which was thereby brought within a nail's breadth of destruction. Many churches built upon the coasts of the maritime provinces were destroyed, by an edict which commanded, that every body on the coasts should retire ten or eleven miles within land, and destroy all habitations within that compass all round the coasts, because a famous pirate made use of them in carrying on a war against the emperor. They were also just going to ruin Macao, and order was given to drive the Portuguese thence, when father Adam used his utmost effort to save it. At this time all his credit and interest, which he had employed so much to the advantage of religion, ended, for, in a little time, he became the object of the most bloody persecution that ever the church suffered.

The four Mandarines, who had the regency during the emperor's minority, moved upon different topicks, and especially animated against the christians, to whom this father was the main support, put him and three of his companions into prison. Other preachers of the gospel were summoned to Peking, who met with the same treatment, and were loaded each with nine chains. They burned their books, their beads, and medals, and whatever else carried the face of religion, nevertheless they spared the churches, as for the christian flock, they met with a more mild usage.

Those famous confessors had the honour to be dragged before all the seats of judgment. There it
was .

was that their enemies did admire their courage. But they were above all moved by the miserable condition of father Adam. That venerable old man, who but a day or two before was the oracle of the court, and the favourite of a great emperor, now appeared in the form of a slave, loaded with chains, and oppressed with infirmities, dejected by the weight and burthen of age, but much more by that of calumny which labour'd to blemish his innocence. He had a sort of catarrh which hinder'd him from making his defence, but father Verbiest forsook him not, and answered for him, to his enemies, in so sensible a manner, that the judges could not enough admire the constancy of the person accus'd, nor the heroical charity of the person who defended him. However, as innocent as he was, he was condemned to be strangled, which is in China an honourable kind of death, but afterwards, as tho' they repented that they had not been unjust enough, they repealed the sentence, and gave another, wherein the father was condemned to be publicly exposed in the market place, and be hacked alive into ten thousand pieces.

The supreme court sent the sentence to the regency, and to the princes of the blood, to have it confirmed, but God, who had till then seem'd to have relinquish'd his servant, began to speak in favour of his cause by a terrible earthquake. The whole land was confounded at this prodigy. Every body exclaimed that Heaven itself would punish the injustice of the magistrates, who therefore, to appease the people, opened all the prisons in the town, and made an act of oblation for all criminals, excepting the confessors of Jesus Christ, who were still kept in chains, as tho' they had been the only victims for whom Heaven had no concern.

But soon after there appeared divers prodigies, and in particular fire consumed great part of the court of justice, at last he obtained that from these unrighteous

judges, which innocence could not. They set father Adam at liberty, and permitted him to go home to his house, till the emperor should otherwise dispose of him. This great man blemish'd, indeed to outward appearance, by an ignominious sentence which was never repealed; but in truth full of glory, for having defended the honour of religion, by exposing his own life, died a little while after, worn away by the toil of an apostolical life, but more by the hardships and inconveniencies of a troublesome prison.

His death was too precious in the eyes of God, to be unaccompany'd with some signal blessing upon the sorrowful remains of persecuted christianity. It is true that the missionaries of the provinces were banished to Canton, among which three were Dominicans, one Franciscan (and another of the same order died in prison) and one and twenty jesuits; yet four were kept at the court, whom the providence of God made use of afterwards to settle christianity again in its pristine splendor.

God himself revenged the innocence of his servants. Sony, the first Mandarin in the regency, the most dangerous enemy the fathers had, died a month or two after. The second, named Soucama, was afterwards indicted and condemned to a cruel death, his goods confiscated; his children, in number seven, had their heads cut off, excepting the third, who was cut to pieces alive, the punishment which that wicked judge had design'd for father Adam, and with which God chastised his crimes in the persons of his children. Yam-quam-sien, who had been the chief instrument in the persecution, fared no better than them, for after the death of father Adam, he was made president of the mathematicks, and had the charge of the kalendar of the empire committed to him. Father Verbiest accused him, and plainly made appear the ignorance of this pitiful mathematician.

This was a bold stroke, because the president's party was very strong, and the flames which had caused the persecution were not yet quenched, but many things concurr'd to give success to this enterprise. The understanding of the father, the kindness which the new emperor had for the Europeans, but especially the particular providence of God which did secretly manage this important affair; for it is certain that, in the several trials whereby they proved the goodness of our mathematicks, the heavens did so exactly agree with what our fathers had foretold, even above the certainty which our tables and calculations could promise us, that it seem'd as tho' God had guided the stars in such a course as was necessary to justify our missionaries account of them.

The president of the mathematicks used his best endeavours to defend himself, and, because he could not hide his ignorance in astronomy, he endeavoured to put upon the judges, and persuade them that the christian religion contained much greater errors than those he was guilty of. In the midst of some meetings, where the emperor was present, he behaved himself in such a manner as the emperor could scarcely bear with him. He laid his hands across, and cried out as loud as he could *See here, do but observe what these fellows adore, and what they would have us worship too, a man who was hanged, a person who was crucified; let any one judge hereby of their understanding and good sense*

But all these excursions served only to diminish his own credit. This wicked person, more blameable for his crimes than for his ignorance, lost his charge, and was condemned to death. Notwithstanding the emperor suspended the execution of the sentence by reason of his extraordinary old age; but God himself executed his sentence of vengeance. He smote him with an horrible ulcer, and, by his sorrowful death, delivered religion from this monster of iniquity.

Then the care of the mathematicks was committed to Father Verbiest, the ancient missionaries were recalled to their old churches, but forbid to go about to build new ones, or to labour in the conversion of the Chinese. Lastly, to magnify our happiness, the memory of father Adam was mightily respected even at court: he was publicly justified and cleared, his charges and titles of honour were remanded him, and his ancestors made nobility. The emperor himself appointed considerable sums of money to build him a stately mausoleum, which at this present is to be seen, in room of a sepulchre, adorned with statues and several marble figures, according to the custom of the country.

Thus it is that God, by a continual vicissitude, proves the constancy of the faithful by persecution, and encourages them again by punishing their persecutors. This happy peace, which the church gained thro' father Verbiest's means, encouraged the missionaries to repair that damage which hell had done. Besides the jesuits, there were several fathers of the orders of St. Francis, and St. Augustin, who entered into the Lord's vineyard. New establishments were gained every where, and, notwithstanding any prohibition, a great number of heathens were converted to the faith, being more afraid of eternal punishment, than of that with which the laws of man seemed to threaten them.

So ardent and so hasty a zeal will perhaps make you amazed; but besides that charity is always hazardous, many things contributed to confirm those who might else be afraid of fatal consequences. The first of these is the great authority which the missionaries have acquired at court in a small time. Especially the emperor is satisfied that they despise honours, and that at home they lead an austere life. The prince is inform'd of this such ways that it is impossible he should be deceived. He had information

tion from spies, of all that passed in their houses, even so nicely as to know their mortifications and corporeal penances

He sends also to the fathers houses a young Tartar, of good parts, under pretence to learn philosophy, but in reality to discover the most secret things in their families, and to be himself, I think, an occasion of offence. He stays there a year, without knowing what the prince's intentions are, who, having sent for him into his presence, commands him to tell him all the private disorders of these fathers, and especially how they have behaved themselves towards him. And when these young men constantly bear testimony of the fathers innocence, I see very well, says the emperor, they have stopp'd your mouth with presents, but I know a way to open it again. Then he makes him be severely fashed at several times, yet is not the pun enough to make the young Tartar speak against his conscience, which pleases the prince mightily, who would be disturbed to find himself deceived in the idea which he has formed to himself of these fervent missionaries.

This obliged him afterwards to take their part in an assembly of the Mandarines, some of which do not esteem the missionaries because their outward carriage seems so good. *As for that matter, says the emperor to them, neither you nor I can find fault with them. After all that I can do to get information, I am persuaded that those people teach us nothing but what themselves practise, and they are rated as modest as they appear outwardly to be.*

The second reason, which engaged the emperor to favour the missionaries, was the great understanding of father Verbiest, who in a small time was reckoned the *Annuaire* of the empire in all faculties. His reputation is every where spread abroad, and upon many occasions his opinion has the repute of an oracle. Some Mandarines one day speaking of the

Trinity, and using it as a fable, one of them said, *I do not know what the christians mean, and am as much puzzled as you; but father Verbiest is of that opinion; what say you to that? Can a man of his sense and understanding mistake?* They all held their tongues, and seemed to yield to this reason. So true is it that the use of human learning is so far from being (as some think) opposite to the spirit of the gospel, that it sometimes serves to establish it, and to render the most obscure mysteries therein credible.

The third reason is that hearty love which the emperor believes the missionaries have for him. It is true the missionaries omit nothing which they think will please him; and as they are the most inflexible and resolute against doing any thing contrary to their religion, so are they the most complaisant and ready to comply with all the reasonable requests of the emperor. A rebellion which happened at this time put it into father Verbiest's power to do the crown a considerable piece of service.

Oufanguer, that famous Chinese general, who had brought the Tartars into the empire, thought he had then a good opportunity to drive them out again. He was naturally courageous, and in Xensi commanded the best of the Chinese soldiery, and had got together a vast deal of money. This made him set up to be emperor, and made him believe he could easily compass his design. And indeed he so order'd his matters, that he made himself presently master of the three great provinces Yunnan, Suchuen, and Queycheu; afterwards a great part of the province of Houquam acknowledged him, so that these possessions and Xensi, which he had in possession a good while before, made him master of almost a third of China.

These conquests seemed to be the more secure to him, because at the same time the viceroys of Quamtun and Lok en followed his example, and gave the emperor

emperor on that side a mighty diversion, and besides a powerful pirate, with a great fleet, attacked, and, in a few days, took the island Formosa at the same time

Less than this would have ruined the Tartars, if they had all concerted their business together, but jealousy, which does often overthrow the firmest leagues, ruined their projects. The king of Fokien fell out with that of Formosa, and, to preserve himself from being damaged by his fleet, made his peace with the emperor, who gave him such assistance as that he made his party good. The king of Quamtum, being unwilling to be any ways under the direction or command of Ousanguet, left him, and put himself under the protection of the Tartars, who turned all their forces against this last rebel, more formidable than all the rest together, for he was master of the western provinces, and the success, which his troops had hitherto met with, gave them heart and courage enough to undertake any thing

After the emperor had tried many several ways to no purpose, he plainly saw that it was impossible to force them from the places where they had intrenched without using his great artillery, but the cannon which he had were iron, and so heavy that they dared not carry them over such steep rocks, as they must do to come to him. He thought father Verbiest might be assistant to him in this matter, he commanded the father therefore to give directions for casting some cannon after the European manner. The father presently excused himself, saying, that he had lived his whole life far from the noise of war, that he was therefore little instructed in those affairs. He added also, that being a religious, and wholly employed in the concerns of another world, he would pray for his majesty's good success, but that he humbly begged that his majesty would be pleased to give him leave not to concern himself with the warfare of this world.

The father's enemies (for a missionary is never without some) thought that now they had an opportunity to undermine him; they persuaded the emperor, that what he commanded the father to do was no ways opposite to the will or intention of the gospel; and that it was no more inconvenient to him to cast cannon than to cast machines and mathematical instruments, especially when the good and safety of the empire were concerned; that therefore without doubt the reason of the father's refusal was because he kept correspondence with the enemy, or at least because he had no respect for the emperor; so that at last the emperor gave the father to understand, that he expected obedience to his last order, not only upon pain of losing his own life, but also of having his religion utterly rooted out.

This was to touch him in the most sensible part, and he was indeed too wise to stand out for a nicety or a scruple at the hazard of losing all that was valuable: I have already assured your majesty that I have very little understanding in casting cannon, said he to the emperor; but since you command me, I will endeavour to make your workmen understand what our books direct in this affair. He took therefore upon himself the care of this work, and the cannon was proved before the emperor, and found to be extraordinary good. The emperor was so well pleased with the work, that he pulled off his mantle, and, in the presence of the whole court, gave it to father Verbiest for a token of his affection.

All the pieces of cannon were made very light and small, but strengthened with a stock of wood from the mouth to the breech, and girt with several bands of iron; so that the cannons were strong enough to bear the force of powder, and light enough to be carried thro' any, even the worst roads.

This

This new artillery did every way answer what they proposed from it. The enemy were obliged to leave their intrenchments in disorder, and soon after to capitulate; for they did not think it possible to hold out against those any longer, who could destroy them without coming themselves into reach.

Oufanguet was himself dead, his son Hom-hoa, who carried on the war, strangled himself thro' despair, and the rest of them were in a small time utterly routed, so that the emperor then began to reign in peace, and continued more and more to shew marks of favour and affection to the missionaries, so that father Verbiest has often sighing said, that the Lord's vineyard was now open, that the heathens themselves gave liberty to enter upon the harvest, but that yet there were scarce any workmen to bring it in.

They send to him for pastors from every place, Tartary, the kingdom of Corea, the provinces of China, which have been left destitute by the death of their ancient pastors, invite, or rather press him to succour them. Neither does this scarcity come from the Europeans want of zeal, but from the differences which have arose between the sacred congregation, who send vicars apostolical into the East, and the king of Portugal, who pretends to a right to nominate all the bishops there, exclusively to any superior ecclesiastical power.

This dispute cools the ardour of those fervent missionaries, who dare not engage themselves where they must incur either the indignation of their holy father, or of a mighty prince, both which things are very formidable. And thus the work of God stood still, and those precious minutes were lost, which the favour of a great emperor, and the diligence of a zealous missionary, might have made so useful to the firm establishing our holy faith. But this is one of the *arsena* of providence, which, after

after it had confounded all the opposition of the enemies of the gospel, even at the expence of working miracles, does sometimes suffer that the zeal of catholicks should do more harm to religion, than the hatred and jealousy of idolaters.

Some time after, my lord bishop of Heliopolis was sent by the sacred congregation with some French ecclesiasticks, full of ardour to reform and increase the new christianity. This courageous prelate had once already missed his voyage for contrary winds having obliged him sometime before to put in at Manilla, a considerable island under the Spanish government, he was taken up upon suspicion there, and obliged to return back into Europe by the way of Mexico. This accident, which had broke his first measures, served only to fill his mind with new and those greater ones. He came to Paris, where his good intentions were well known. Rome heard him with pleasure, and followed his projects in all that respected the eastern missions; so that he came honoured with a power from the holy see, and laded with the alms of the faithful, who expected nothing less from his zeal than the conversion of the new world.

He therefore once more passed over the seas, and happily arrived at Chiga, where he began to scatter abroad that flame which would warm all the missionaries. The jesuits, and other religious, not only acknowledged his authority, but also took the new oath which the sacred congregation had appointed, altho' the king of Portugal had absolutely forbid it. For they thought, that that prince, in whom the love of religion had always prevailed before his private interest, would not take it ill when he should know, that their refusal of it might have occasioned the destruction of christianity in China, and perhaps of the missions in all the other parts of the East.

This

This was matter of great joy to the bishop, who, after his happy beginning, made ready, according to his former notions, to new till this new vineyard of the Lord, whither he thought himself sent like the prophet heretofore * *Ecce constitui te super gentes, ut destruas, & disperdas, & dissipas, &c* But God Almighty was satisfy'd with his good intentions, and took him to himself a few months after his arrival His death greatly surprized all the faithful, it did especially afflict the fervent ecclesiasticks, who were the companions of his voyage, the other missionaries submitted with resignation to the will of God, being persuaded, that whatsoever providence appoints is always for his glory, and the good of the elect, if they make a right use of it

This was sweetened by the arrival of two other bishops, who a little while after supplied his place under the title of Vicars Apostolic The first was monsieur d Argolis, an Italian of the order of St Francis, noted among those of his order, for his excellent virtues and extraordinary knowledge He had been employed in the chiefest business there, and our holy father thought he could not make choice of a wiser man than he to place at the helm of so flourishing a mission As he went by Siam, monsieur Constance, understanding his worth, presented him to the king, who would fain have kept him in his kingdom, but, because the orders of the holy see obliged him to go farther, he resolved at least to shew him some marks of his esteem and affection towards him, in ordering him, and two of his companions of the same order, a considerable pension, so that, had it not been for the revolutions which a little while after happened in his kingdom, this prince, worthy of a better fortune, would have had his missionaries in China, as well as the most zealous princes in Europe

Since

Since this wise prelate hath been in China, the natural sweetness of his temper hath very much contributed to the comfort of the faithful, and conversion of the heathen. He hath visited all the provinces which the holy see committed to his care, consecrating priests, teaching and exhorting them, administering the sacrament of confirmation, uniting all their affections as much as possibly he could, whose different interests seemed to have cooled their mutual charity to one another in Jesus Christ. And tho' one would think that the Portuguese could never have a respect for him, because their pretensions are wholly opposite to this institution of vicars apostolical, yet he has behaved himself with so much prudence, that all nations here think themselves particularly obliged to him.

The second bishop, whom the holy see has dignified with the title of Vicar Apostolical, is monsieur de Basilee a Chinese, educated by the fathers of St Francis's order, afterwards taking upon himself the order of St Dominick. When he was only a missionary, he had a flaming zeal for the conversion of his dear country, and, during the persecution of father Adam, he was the main support of religion in all the provinces which he travelled thro', and strengthened in the faith. When he was consecrated bishop, he performed all his duties perfectly well, and the holy see did so far approve of his conduct, as to let him nominate his successor. He nominated his vicar general the reverend father de Leonissa, an Italian of St Francis's order, who in his private life might have been a pattern to the most strict religious, and, in the important employment of vicar apostolical, has shewn, that he has all that zeal, all that prudence, and all that constancy, which the government of a great church requires.

My lord bishop of Basilee, after he had thus chosen this worthy successor of his apostleship, fell sick

sick at Nankin, and died full of those happy visions which God gives even in this world to his saints. At his death, that faith shone brightly which had animated him in his life time, and his last minutes, wherein he appeared to be filled with the most sensible touches of christian hope, seemed to give him an antepast of the joy of paradise. All his trouble was for the missionaries, by whom he was affectionately beloved, and for the christians, who lost in him the first priest, the first religious, and the first bishop that ever China had yet given to christianity. And as his blessed memory was every where spread abroad, they have set up his picture in several places, which the reverend father de Leonissa sent to the sacred congregation, to preserve the memory of a prelate, whose own merit, as well as our particular obligations to him, ought to make eternally respected.

Besides this, the pope honoured mr Maigrot and mr Pin, with the title of Vicars Apostolical, both of them doctors of the Sorbon, diligent, zealous, and set upon following the intentions of the holy see, and in a word, companions of mr Heliopolis, and inheritors of a double portion of his spirit.

If the number of missionaries had been answerable to that of the pastors, the churches in China had now been perfectly filled, but, as I have said, the over care, which every one has taken to provide for it exclusively of others, has rendered people less desirous of going. Good men, nay, even those who have occasioned these disorders, have mourned for them in secret. Some zealous persons have endeavoured to remedy this. My lord bishop of Munster and Paderborn, whom the care of his own diocese did not hinder from extending his care even as far as the East, gave a settlement for six missionaries for ever to China, but, dying a little while after, his last will was never executed. Others in France,

in Spain, and in Italy, took a great deal of pains to help this forsaken mission, but they could never compass their designs.

Lewis the Great, who is himself as zealous for establishing the gospel as all the other princes put together, among the great designs which he has been intent upon to make religion flourish in Europe, thought, that he ought not to neglect that good which he might do in Asia. He was very sensible of the necessities of China, which father Verbiest had represented to him in one of his letters, in the most sensible manner in the world; and, altho' he very well knew, that he could not make missionaries (a quality which nobody can give us but the vicar of Jesus Christ) he doubted not but that religiouses who were exactly skilled in mathematicks, in attaining, according to his orders, an exact knowledge in astronomy, might at the same time, with good success, labour according to the design of their institution, in the conversion of infidels. He was very well satisfied, that, of all the means which human prudence could advantageously make use of in the most holy actions, there were none which promoted the concerns of religion in China more than the mathematicks.

Being therefore willing at once to satisfy his zeal for the advancement of the gospel, and the desire which he had of bringing the sciences to perfection, he made choice of six jesuits, whom he thought capable of giving good satisfaction to the learned, and instruction to intelligent persons. Those, who were thus appointed, could have wished they had all the abilities necessary for this employment. They did nevertheless set out with a good will, being ready to sacrifice their lives and all their small talents to the greater glory of God, and by consequence to the pious designs of the greatest prince in the world.

When we came into China, we found it in the condition I have been relating, the harvest was plentiful every where, but it was almost destitute of workmen; or (to make use of father Intorcetta's words, one of the most noted missionaries) drowned in those tears, which the sorrow of seeing herself abandoned forced continually from her: *Benedictus Deus, qui fecit nobiscum misericordiam suam, liberavit vos à naufragio, ut prope naufragam nostram missionem ab aquis lacrimarum summique mœroris eriperet; vos omnes in corde servo, & tanquam veros Societatis filios virosque Apostolicos intimis animi præcordiis amplector, &c.* Thus he spake to us in his first letter, to encourage us to assist in the glorious labours of this mission.

Providence put it into our power in a little time to employ ourselves usefully there; and if we had done no other good than was the drawing after us by our example several other missionaries who followed us, and who now are full of their holy labours in the work of God, it would be a great comfort to us, and a very great advantage to China. But that which is much more comfortable is, that we have hereby contributed very much towards removing those lets and hinderances to the propagating the gospel of which I spake before; for, at the remonstrance of father Tachard, supported also by that of the reverend father general, Innocent XI suspended the oath. And after, Clement VIII. granted to the king of Portugal to nominate three bishops, one of Peking, the other of Nankin, and the third of Macao. And at this present, our holy father, who in himself hath all the zeal, all the piety, and all the wisdom of his predecessors, animated by the same spirit, and moved (if I might do myself the honour of saying so) with what I have had the honour to represent unto him of the present state of these missions, is about to regulate all

all the particulars therein by the prudent counsel and advice of the sacred congregation ; to the end, that hereafter nothing may be so much laid to heart as the interest of religion, and that all kingdoms of Europe, being united in the love of Jesus Christ, may with one consent labour to bring about and perfect this great work.

Thus, sir, I have given you a general view of the establishment and progress of christianity in the empire of China, from the preaching of the apostles till the last times.* This church, heretofore very famous, but after that wholly overturned by superstition, hath at last been re-established one age ago, by one of the greatest men of our society, and augmented by the labours of a great many missionaries, governed by wise prelates, honoured by the protection of many emperors, supported by the bounty of all the princes of Europe, and, which is more for its glory, persecuted by all the enemies of truth, and made precious in the eyes of God, by the chains, the banishment, and blood of the confessors. I am, with all imaginable respect,

S I R,

Your most humble

and most obedient Servant,

L. J.



L E T T E R XII

To the most Reverend Father De la Chaſſe, Confefſor
to the King

*Concerning the Manner how each Miſſionary preaches
the Goſpel in China, and of the Ferrency of the
New Chriſtians.*

Most Reverend Father,

ALtho' the important affairs of China, which detain me at present at Rome, require all my application, and seem to be my excuse if I am wanting in performing any parts of my duties so exactly as I could desire, I cannot nevertheless in the least forget, both the obligations which I myself have to you in particular, as well as the missions in the East in general

It was you, most reverend father, who formerly drew out the platform of them, who just then made choice of their ministers, whom your testimonials, together with the esteem of one of the greatest princes upon earth, have rendered in process of time more renowned than all their particular qualifications

This royal protection, under which we have undauntedly affronted dangers, those letters written on our behalf to sovereigns and their officers, those magnificent presents, those regularly settled pensions, those extraordinary helps, (and what we value much more) those so grave counsels, favouring so much of the spirit of God, wherewith you have in a manner hallowed our first voyages, and which we still look upon as the safest rule of our behaviour and conduct, are benefits either received from yourself, or procured by your means 'Tis but just, most reverend father, that, in what part of the world soever we be, we

should testify our acknowledgments. For my part, I am persuaded, that one cannot give you more solid demonstrations of them, than by maintaining, by our great zeal, what you have performed to our advantage. I supposed you would be satisfied, and that at least I should perform my duty, by acquainting you with the success wherewith it hath pleased God to crown our labours, and, what benefits we may hope to reap from the missionaries which you yourself will form, or at least, who shall come to us out of your hands.

In a word, the time I shall employ, in writing to you on this subject, is so far from any ways diminishing that due care and constant endeavour to promote the welfare of our missions, that, without all doubt, it will much contribute to their future establishment; for I hope, that your protection, becoming thereby more effectual and solid, will more advance our affairs, than all the pains and care which I can possibly take for their success.

Pursuant to the first project that we laid, we were all of us to stay at Peking, in the palace, and service of the emperor; but providence otherwise ordered it, and they at last gave way to our inclination, which moved us to disperse ourselves all over the provinces, for the propagating of religion. They were content to detain father Gerbillon and father Bouvet at court, where they immediately applied themselves to the study of languages with such success, that they were quickly in a condition to assist the christians, yea, and to be employed by the emperor in several important affairs. The most considerable was the peace between the Muscovites and Chinese; the treaty of which was then a-foot 300 leagues from Peking, whither father Gerbillon was sent with prince Sofan who was nominated plenipotentiary for the empire.

Nipchoa was the place where the ministers of the two nations assembled; each of them having a body
of

of soldiers attending, to terminate, if occasion served, what the negotiation could not decide: the haughtiness of both did oftentimes make them fly out into extremes; which would have proved fatal to both parties, if father Gerbillon by his discretion had not moderated animosities. He continually passed from camp to camp, made speeches, proposed expedients, pacified their minds, and he dissembled whatever might be apt mutually to exasperate them in the conclusion: He so dexterously managed the common interests, that the peace was concluded to the satisfaction both of Chinese and Muscovites. Prince Sossun was so well pleased with the zeal and wisdom of this father, that he declared publickly, that, if it had not been for him, all had been in a desperate condition; he express'd himself about the matter to the emperor to the same effect, insomuch that this prince had the curiosity to be acquainted with him. He found him to be a very sensible person, capable, sincere, forward to execute, and even to anticipate his orders. This character wonderfully pleased the emperor; he had a mind to have him near his person, at the palace, in the campaign, and in his progress into Tartary, where he bestowed upon him so many signal marks of his esteem, that the grandees of his court might have perhaps conceived some jealousy from them, had not the father's modesty won him the affection of every body.

These first favours were followed by an extraordinary one that was much better relished by this missionary; he pitch'd upon him for his tutor in mathematics and philosophy conjointly with father Bover, whose merit he likewise much esteemed. The passion, this prince hath for sciences, makes him very intent upon studies every day in a manner two or three hours together, which he spares from his pleasure: it is more than probable, that, by the inquiry into natural truth, providence will conduct him

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Pursuant to the first project that we laid, we were all of us to stay at Pekin, in the palace, and service of the emperor; but providence otherwise ordered it, and they at last gave way to our inclination, which moved us to disperse ourselves all over the provinces, for the propagating of religion. They were content to detain father Gerbillon and father Bouvet at court; where they immediately applied themselves to the study of languages with such success, that they were quickly in a condition to assist the christians, yea, and to be employed by the emperor in several important affairs. The most considerable was the peace between the Muscovites and Chinese; the treaty of which was then a-foot 300 leagues from Pekin, whither father Gerbillon was sent with prince Sofan who was nominated plenipotentiary for the empire.

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of soldiers attending, to terminate, if occasion served, what the negotiation could not decide the haughtiness of both did oftentimes make them fly out into extremes, which would have proved fatal to both parties, if father Gerbillon by his discretion had not moderated animosities. He continually passed from camp to camp, made speeches proposed expedients, pacified their minds, and he dissembled whatever might be apt mutually to exasperate them in the conclusion. He so dexterously managed the common interests, that the peace was concluded to the satisfaction both of Chinese and Muscovites. Prince Soan was so well pleased with the zeal and wisdom of this father, that he declared publicly, that, if it had not been for him, all had been in a desperate condition, he express'd himself about the matter to the emperor to the same effect, inasmuch that this prince had the curiosity to be acquainted with him. He found him to be a very sensible person, capable, sincere, forward to execute, and even to anticipate his orders. This character wonderfully pleased the emperor, he had a mind to have him near his person, at the palace, in the campaign, and in his progress into Tartary, where he bestowed upon him so many signal marks of his esteem, that the grandees of his court might have perhaps conceived some jealousy from them, had not the father's modesty won him the affection of every body.

These first favours were followed by an extraordinary one, that was much better relished by this missionary; he pitch'd upon him for his tutor in mathematics and philosophy conjointly with father Bover, whose merit he likewise much esteem'd. The passion, this prince hath for sciences, makes him very intent upon studies every day in a manner two or three hours together, which he spares from his pleasure. It is more than probable, that, by the inquiry into natural truth, providence will conduct him

by degrees to the eternal fountain of truth, without which, all others serve not so much to perfect the mind, as to puff it up with pride in the eyes of men, and render it inexcusable before God.

Father Verbiest had already begun to explain these sciences to him, but, besides his making use of the Chinese tongue in his lectures, which is not proper, by reason of its often repeated equivocals, to illustrate notions otherwise obscure enough of themselves, besides that, I say father Verbiest died. These fathers supposed the Tartarian tongue would be better liked by this prince, and that it might serve their turn the better to make the notions intelligible. It happened according to their expectation, and the emperor became in a short time so capable, that he composed a book of geometry. He afterwards gave it to the princes his sons, and undertook to be their master in it, he called them together every day, explained to them the most difficult propositions of Euclid, yea, and this prince, having upon his shoulders the government of one of the most potent empires of the world, did not disdain, with his rule and compass in his hand, to spend his time in the study in speculations, which interest alone scarce makes delightful to private persons.

Whilst these two fathers by their credit made themselves fit to be in a short time the main support of religion, father Fontaney, father Visdelou, and myself, did endeavour not to be unserviceable in the provinces. Father Fontaney went to Nankin, father Visdelou took care of the churches of Xansi, where I also remained some time with him, from whence afterwards I removed to Xensi, the ancient place of father Faber's mission, the christians of which place, notwithstanding their having been deserted these many years, do nevertheless preserve their first fervency, and are still looked upon as the mould of the great flock, and model of other believers. We understood

understood at that time, by our own proper experience, what was often told us, that *the least truly was great*, and that *happy is that labourer whom the Master of the harvest doth please to make use of to gather it in*. Every thing is matter of consolation in this glorious employment, the faith of the new converts, the innocence of the ancient, the aptness of the children, the devotion and modesty of women, but yet, one is more especially affected by some eminent and exemplary conversions, to perceive the work of grace now and then wrought in the hearts of idolaters.

The truth is, these are in respect of us convincing proofs of that truth which we preach and declare. For indeed, by what secret charm could we be able to animate dead minds, and raise them (if I may presume so to say) to reason, to God, to all the maxims of the most pure and refined morality; minds, that have been buried and immersed from their very infancy in flesh and blood? What force and power, what blandishment could be able in an instant to bring into captivity rebellious minds under the yoke of a religion so severe as ours is, if Jesus Christ himself did not work miracles, and if the holy Spirit, by the inward and invisible operation of grace, did not supply the defect of his ministers?

This is that, most reverend father, which we experience every day with astonishing comfort, which doth establish, strengthen, and settle us unmovable in the same faith which God produceth in idolaters. I would to God I were able to relate to you particularly all that passes in China on this subject, where, in spite of all the stratagems of devils, God is so constantly and resolutely glorified. Yet, not being able upon my departure to pick up the particular memorial of each church, I shall only content myself to tell you in part what I myself have observed in my mission, and after what manner I have made it my business

ness to adorn it, according to the ideas and practice of the most grave and ancient primitive missionaries.

All my business was reduced to three principal points; the first was to cherish and keep up the piety of old believers by the preaching of the word of God, and above all, by particular exhortations, which is abundantly more profitable and edifying, than any thing that is spoken in publick, where the discourse is often not understood, either because of the people's stupidity, or else by reason of the preacher's ill utterance and pronounciation. These poor souls, whom simplicity and fervency make teachable, do oftentimes hear that with tears in their eyes, which they do not comprehend but by halves; but yet, they always improve and edify by what they understand perfectly. They are especially most taken with comparisons, parables, and histories; and albeit they are not acquainted nor accustomed to that vehement and sometimes passionate action of our preachers, yet for all that, they are moved and wrought upon, when they speak to them with earnestness and concern.

I no sooner came to a private house to counsel sick persons, or about other business, but presently you should have all the family, nay, and the christians too of the neighbourhood flock together about me, and intreat me to speak to them concerning God. I had made but an indifferent progress in understanding and pronouncing their tongue, especially when I first began to preach, which nevertheless gave them no manner of offence; so far from it, that if they could but never so little apprehend what I meant, they never were cloy'd with hearing me.

I have moreover taken notice, that they had always rather I should preach myself, how barbarous soever my language might appear, than that I should get them instructed, as I sometimes did

did by the help of a Chinese catechist, that had been formed some time before to exercises of this nature. But, my visits not being so frequent as I could have wished, I endeavoured to make them up by godly books, with which, by God's blessing, China is very well stored, there having been some missionaries sufficiently zealous and able to compose books, and that very politely, upon all the points of religion. They have very curious and compleat catechisms, wherein the entire and compleat body of the doctrine of christianity, the life, miracles, and death of our blessed Lord, the commandments of God and the church are clearly explained. There are likewise to be found particular expositions upon the gospels, treatises upon moral and christian duties, some solid controversies adapted to every body's capacity, practices of piety for the different conditions of life, prayers and instructions for the use of the sacraments, a body of divinity for the learned, for they have translated some part of Tho Aquinas, and last of all, St Ignatius's exercises for those that mind heavenly things. Insomuch, that this spiritual seed of the evangelical word is scattered all over, and multiplied an hundred fold.

I could have wished there might have been a translation of the Missal, upon the account of saying mass in Chinese, together with an exact version of the holy scriptures. Conformable to the permission obtained for that purpose, the Missal was finished, and Father Couplet presented it some years ago to the pope. However, after having duly examined the matter, it was not thought convenient to make use of it, but they continued to say mass in the Latin tongue, as in other places. As for the compleat version of the Bible, there are such weighty reasons why it should not forthwith be published, that it would seem a rash piece of impudence to do it, and so much the more, because there is already

expounded, in divers books, what is contained in the gospel; yea, and even whatsoever is most instructive in the rest of the holy scriptures.

The second method, to increase the fervent zeal of christians, was prayer: Besides the time appointed for mass, I assembled them twice a day to make publick prayers. They sung in two choirs with such marvellous devotions, that it made me wish that the European christians might have been witnesses of their piety; for their rude, and sometimes scandalous deportments before our altars, will certainly be condemned at the great tribunal, by the modesty of those later christians.

They do not understand either singing by notes or musick as we do, yet have they tunes of their own composure no ways unpleasant, which seems to me abundance more tolerable than what are used in several societies in Europe: They had likewise several sorts of instruments; concerts they seem to admire, and our villages in France would serve their turn well enough in that point.

The Chinese are of that temper, that they had need of something sensible to heighten their elevation; sumptuous and magnificent ornaments, singing, pompous processions, the noise of bells and instruments, and the ceremonies of the church, are very taking with them, and allure them to divine service. I took extraordinary care in that matter, to procure for them all that the church out of her most wise conduct hath permitted to the servants of God; yet, always distinguishing that which superstition, if one have not a care of it, is wont, in process of time, to put into the common people's head.

I apply'd myself more especially to inspire them with respect to our mysteries, they made their confession usually every fortnight, Their confession was not only attended with tears (for the Chinese

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are more subject to weeping than we) but also with severe penance, in the evening in the vestry.

The lively faith, they had for the adorable sacrament, made them constant attenders on the altar; and, when I permitted them to receive it, they communicated with affections of veneration capable of inflaming not only such who are but lukewarm, but almost christians: you might see them prostrate at several times, with their face on the ground lamenting, and commonly shedding abundance of tears. Such like postures, more frequent and ordinary amongst Asiatics than Europeans, yet evermore edifying and submissive, do exceedingly contribute to excite devotion in the soul, and to impress upon the mind that profound veneration which the majesty of our mysteries deserves at our hands.

This respect extended itself also to the images, reliques, to the medals, holy water, and in general, to whatsoever bears the character of our religion.

They bore, more than that, a particular veneration for the Virgin Mary, which perhaps had gone too far, if care had not been used to regulate it. They call her the Holy Mother (Chin-Mou) and do invoke her in all their straits and exigencies. The experience, they have had of her protection, hath confirmed them in this warm devotion, and the benefits, they receive daily from her, persuade them she is acceptable to God.

The women are yet more animated with these sentiments than the men. All their churches are dedicated to her under the title of Chin-Mou tam, that is to say, the temple of the Blessed Mother. There they meet together, for they never enter into the church of the men, as the men dare not presume to set a foot into theirs. But the passionate love, that the christians have for Jesus Christ, makes them really devout, and walk worthy of the profession they have embraced. They continually repeat these following

following words, *Jesus the Master of heaven, who shed his blood for us; Jesus who died to save us.* Being it is the mystery wherein we most carefully instruct them, so it is that they most stedfastly believe. Every one shall have their crucifixes in their chambers; and notwithstanding the nakedness of our images did at first give some offence, yet have they in process of time accustomed themselves to them. We distribute them to the people with some precaution, for fear they may chance to fall into the hands of idolaters, who might, either through ignorance or malice, be apt to prophane them.

And this was the reason why, after mass was said, I commonly removed from the altar a large graven crucifix, the pagans do oftentimes come out of curiosity to see our churches; now they might have stole it away, or spoken of it irreverently and blasphemously; which nevertheless was not brought to pass by the paints of Christ's passion which I left with them.

Now as for christians, we are far from concealing from them this sacred mystery of our redemption, or from dissembling in the least circumstance of the same. What certain hereticks have writ, concerning it, is a foul calumny, which all the Chinese books and cuts, therein engraven, have long ago disproved and confuted.

The cross is carried publicly in the streets in procession, planted on the tops of churches, and painted over the doors of the christians houses. I have nowhere observed the ceremony of the adoring of the cross, performed every Good Friday publicly, practised with more adoration than in China; nay, I sincerely protest, that I never assisted thereat without being forced to mingle my tears with those of the believers, who outdo themselves in devotion and publick penance on that day especially. Those, who have accused their faith in this point, would them-
selves

selves be ashamed at the insensibleness of Europeans, had they assisted at our ceremonies; for our part, we are overjoyed to see the Opprobrium of the cross to triumph, as far as the utmost limits of the universe, ~~over~~ the most proud and haughty nation of the world.

The particular instruction of the Chinese women is much more troublesome ~~than~~ that of men; they are never visited but in the time of their sickness, neither do they ever come to visit the missionaries, but they may be spoken with in their churches, or else one may cause them to meet every fortnight to say mass, and administer the sacrament to them; they dare not come oftener for fear of scandal, the laws of the country do not so much as allow them that, because the disorders, that happen every time the Pagan women visit the temples of the Bonzes, cause our assemblies to be suspected, and afford a specious pretence to the Gentiles to cry down religion.

Notwithstanding a man cannot imagine what fruit may be reap'd by it, I came to this church upon Friday evening to hear confessions. 'Tis always in a place expos'd to every one's view; for in this case one cannot act with too much caution. On Saturday morning I finish'd the confessions of those that were not able to get a place the day foregoing. Almost every one of them confess, and would be glad so to do every day if they had liberty granted. Whether it be tenderness of conscience, or esteem for the sacrament, or some other reason best known to themselves, I know not; but they think they can never set time enough apart to discover their faults. There is required abundance of patience to hear them, and, being naturally of a mild disposition, they would take it very ill to be handled roughly; yet have they one good quality, that they are seldom self-will and froward. They receive the instructions from

from their director in all humility ; they blindly pin their faith upon his sleeve ; we never inflict great penance on them, nay tho' it be a difficult matter to reduce them from their ordinary peccadilloes, yet do not they find it so hard to bewail and lament ~~for~~ them.

As for notorious sins they very rarely commit them, because their ~~condition~~ ^{condition} exempts them from the most dangerous opportunities ; and, if they could be brought to keep peace in their domestick affairs, their life would be otherwise wonderful innocent : I have observed in many of them a certain devotion that wanted but little of holiness. They always ~~ap~~ ^{ap}ply themselves to business or to prayer, seeking all opportunities for the education of their children, or for their own improvement : very scrupulous and nice in the observation of the practice of every christian duty ; charitable, frequent in mortification ; in a particular manner zealous for the conversion of idolaters ; attentive to all occasions that present themselves to do acts of charity ; insomuch that I have heard the ancientest missionaries say, that, if China once turn'd christian, almost all the women would be saved. This is not an affected encomium of the Chinese women ; I do faithfully and honestly relate what I have seen, and I judge of other churches by this whereof I have the care and conduct.

The instruction of the youth of riper years gave me as much trouble. I was persuaded that this age, above all other, requir'd cultivating, especially in China, where many things concur to make them have an aversion for the service of God ; their easy soft temper, the complaisance of all about them ; their relations that doat upon them, and seldom carry a strict hand over them, but let them have their wills ; the company of heathen children always corrupted and vicious very soon ; their dependence, their complaisance with school-masters, ~~who~~ ^{many}

many times have such influence on them, as to inspire them with an aversion for religion. All these are obstacles to their instruction, very hard to surmount. what care soever we take

Yet was I willing to discharge my duty by several ways and means, that, which appeared to me the most effectual, was to take a christian school master into my house, who was ~~was~~ a zealous man, the children came thither to learn, and I took the opportunity to instill devotion into them, to expound to them the principal articles of religion, to train them up, and discipline them against the assaults of ~~the~~ *the* *Genates*, to accustom them to the ceremonies of the church, where they assisted at mass every day. This practice did also produce another good effect the children of idolaters who came to study under the tuition of the same master, whither by reason of cheapness, or because of the nearness of the place, heard, whether they would or no, what was taught to their school fellows, these instructions form'd and season'd them by little and little to christianity, and replenish'd their mind with abundance of good notions and ideas, which, as so many seeds, in process of time, did produce evangelical fruit, that is to say, real conversions.

It were to be wish'd there were a good number of christian school masters that might teach gratis in cities, that would be the best means to propagate religion, and to preserve good manners, and keep up ~~good~~ *good* families, but the missionaries are so far from being in a condition to maintain them, that they are hard put to it to subsist themselves, for they do not lead such a life as some ill informed, or rather ill affected authors would have made the world believe they did. ~~May~~ *May*, and I speak even of those who are at court, who seem by their outside to live in the affluence of all accommodations. It is true, indeed, they gain their silks according to the mode of

of the country) when they go to visit persons of quality; yea, and they are sometimes carried in a sedan, or else on horseback, attended by servants; all which is necessary to keep up their credit, and preserve the protection of the Mandarines, for want of which the christians would be often oppressed; but yet that makes the missionaries to lead an hard life, for these expences consuming their whole revenue, or pension, which never amounts to an hundred crowns per Annum, the small portion that remains is scarce sufficient to live on. The missionary is very decently (not to say very poorly) habited in his house, his lodging is very inconvenient, he lies upon the hard ground, or upon a very thin quilt without sheets: As for his table, it is so frugal, that there is never a monk in Europe to whom the canon prescribes such a rigorous abstinence, some of them pass whole years together with only rice, leguminous vegetables, and water; for the Thee, that is usually drank, is neither pleasant to the palate of a Chinese nor a foreigner.

However, I speak only of the time that they are in their house; for as soon as ever they come abroad to travel about the provinces, and to seek the lost sheep in the villages, mountains, and the most remote places, one is not able to express the continual fatigues of their mission; (I speak chiefly of those that perform in the western provinces; for the channels, that water almost all the provinces of the south, make these perambulations less tedious.) Then it is that they labour night and day, lie in barns, ~~and~~ with the poor countrymen, and are exposed to the scorching sun, and the most vehement cold, often-times covered all over with snow, and wet to the skin with rain; and then we ~~rise with nothing to~~ comfort us at our arrival but fervent christians, that quite weary us out by the exercise of our ministry that they expect from us.

The province of Xenfi, that fell to my care, is one of the largest in all China. I had some christian churches established within an hundred leagues of one another, whither I must go by roads so toilsome, that even horses are of no use. They have mules bred in the mountains, and managed for this sort of jurnies, that is to say, for the easiest ways, as for the other ways you are ~~forced~~ to foot it, whether you creep on all four up the rocks, or descend into the precipices. You cross over the valley in water and dirt, exposed to tygers, but yet more to robbers, whose retreat the country does favour.

• They are not like those fine ways and delightful pleasant champagne provinces of the south, which art and nature have seem'd rather to have made for the delight of the inhabitants, than for the convenience of travellers. The vallies of the Alps and Pyrenees are much more passable, and one may properly say of China, that, where it is fine, nothing in the world is finer, and, when it ceases to be so, nothing is more horrid and frightful. Nevertheless, ~~from~~ the death of father Fabor, one takes delight to travel along those tedious roads that he watered formerly with the sweat of his brows, where he hath shed abroad that sweet savour of holiness that still upholds the faith of christians, and animates the zeal of the missionaries.

The other churches of this province are more easily come at. I spent a great part of the year in travelling from village to village, catechizing, preaching, and administering the sacraments to believers that assembled upon my passage in all the places that I appointed. I divided my time between them and the idolaters, whose conversion always proves more frequent in these solitary remote places than in great cities, or in the metropolis of a province. Some of them there were, who being already convinced of the truth by reading, or by their commerce with christians,

christians, came of their own accord to receive baptism : Others shaken, and roused either by their relations or friends, came to hear disputations, and at last surrendered themselves to the grace of Jesus Christ : Many allured by novelty, or by the industry of their neighbours, heard attentively, and always disputed with a great deal of heat ; amongst whom, some there were that withdrew from the disputation more hardened than ever ; yet others, more faithful to the drawings of the Spirit, gave glory to God, and humbly acknowledged their errors. All my trouble in this sort of controversies was, that I could not deliver myself as I would. The difficulty of explaining myself in a foreign language deprived the truth of its weight and power. I thought, if I could but have spoken my native tongue, there should not have been one idolater in my auditory, that should not have opened his eyes to truth first, and then to faith. But besides that, men commonly speak enough of it to make every man inexcusable, as St. Paul saith ; yet I made moreover this reflection, That he that plants, and he that waters, what pains soever he may take, and how expert soever he may be in planting and watering well, yet does but very little by that. A man ought to refer this great work of converting souls to God ; 'tis he alone that causes these plants to increase, that nourishes them, and raises them up to himself, according to the order of his infinite mercy and eternal purposes. And at ~~skete~~ ^{skete} ~~set~~ ^{set} times fixed and ordained in the eternal counsels of divine predestination, how many times have I seen a few words, ill pronounced, sensibly to triumph ~~over error~~, because the Holy Spirit, that master within the elect, doth unfold the sense of them : whereas, ~~real~~ discourses have had none other effect, but only to harden the heart ; when, by a just judgment, God was not pleased to accompany them with an extraordinary.

extraordinary evidence and demonstration of the Spirit

You will, without doubt, most reverend father, be exceeding glad to understand the nature of the ~~many~~ difficulties we meet withal in the conversion of the Gentiles. I have observed three sorts of them that seem peculiar to the Chinese. Persons of quality, and those who would be ~~thought~~ wise, objected chiefly against the ~~mysteries~~ their hearts rose chiefly against the Trinity and Incarnation, a God that was penetrable, a God that could die, was no less in respect of them, than of the Jews, a stumbling block and a ~~piece of folly~~. The existence of God, eternal, supreme, infinitely just, infinitely powerful, went easily down with them, and the convincing proofs of it, that I urged to them, made them sometimes forbear entering into the lists with me thereupon.

To proceed in order, and to follow the roads which prudence and holy fathers have chalked out for us on these occasions, I divided our religion into two parts. In the first, I proposed to them what ~~soever~~ reason exempt from passion dictates to us. That there is a God, that this God, being infinitely holy, enjoins us to love virtue, and shun vice, to obey princes, to respect our relations, to do no wrong to one's neighbour, that good men, that are oftentimes miserable in this world, enjoy a certain reward in the next, that, on the contrary, wicked men, who spend their life in inordinate pleasures, are rigorously punished after ~~death~~, that this same hope and fear, that are the beginnings of wisdom, are likewise the first rule of our demeanour, but yet, that the inflamed love, that every man ought to have for this supreme arbitrator of life and death, is capable alone to render us perfect.

After I had convinced them by these maxims, I led them practise, with this spirit of love and fear, these

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these divine lessons ; prostrate yourselves every-day before the infinite majesty of this God that you acknowledge ; in this posture, with tears in your eyes, and an heart broken and contrite with grief, for knowing him so late, beg of him from the bottom of your heart, that he would please to raise you to these sublime truths, ~~which man doth~~ not discover to you, but which it hath pleased him to reveal to the world by his beloved Son, which at present make up the particular character of the christian faith.

It was not always such an easy matter to obtain what I demanded ; the most part of the Gentiles, accustomed blindly to pursue their passions, found more difficulty to embrace this novel kind of life, than to believe the most abstruse mysteries. Yet I can assure you, reverend father, that, of all those that submitted thereto in earnest, 'I saw not any that was not a few days after disposed to believe the most difficult things which the new testament teacheth us ; so true it is, that faith is the gift of God, that cannot be acquired by all the force of reasoning ; and those only obtain, who follow our Saviour's counsel : *Seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened to you.* God indeed, to accomplish this promise, did concur pretty often to the conversion in a most miraculous manner ; and I observed in several new converts so many enlightenings, just upon their resolving to live well, and be constant in prayer, that the Holy Spirit must needs have illuminated them.

A gentleman, whom reading and disputing had made to waver in his opinion, could not yet resolve to believe ; yet, he determined notwithstanding to practise the morality of JESUS CHRIST, supposing, that a good life would much conduce to dispel these mists. At the first, his doubts got ground of him instead of being vanquished ; the more he looked upon

upon the cross, the more did his spirit revolt. He compared the fables of his own religion with the ignominious death of a God man that lays the foundation of ours. They both seemed to him equally ridiculous, and, take what care he could to search, nothing could be found that confirmed him more in christianity than in ~~his~~ *his* relations, and divers of his friends and acquaintance, used their utmost endeavours to win him over to Jesus Christ, but all to no purpose, and he was just upon the point of taking up his old course again, when our blessed Lord stopped him upon the very brink of the precipice.

One night (as I had it from his own mouth) he saw in his dream heaven open, Jesus Christ appeared to him full of majesty, sitting at the right hand of the Father, and surrounded with an infinite company of blessed spirits, on one hand, he shewed him those eternal rewards that are promised to christians, on the other, he discover'd to him profound ~~masses~~ *masses*, which the torments and shrieks of a great many idolaters made gaskly and frightful. *That is thy portion*, saith he, with a threatening countenance, *if thou dost not follow me*. Oh! son, continued he with a more mild countenance, *Mist my cross discourage you? And mist a death, which is the source of my glory, make you ashamed?*

This vision frightened him, and he awakened quite another man. ~~he did not~~ *he did not* look upon it as a dream, he did not busy himself to find out what extraordinary thing chance and an over heated imagination were capable oftentimes to produce during sleep. The poor man being persuaded, that God had spoken to him, demanded to be baptised with a great deal of importunity, and he was so far from having any scruple to submit to the belief of our mysteries, that he protested he would willingly part with his life to defend the truth of them.

Did?

Another,

Another, less knowing, but much more obstinate, did not only not forsake his errors, but did even scoff at and deride our most holy mysteries, and was present at my instructions only to jeer them; yet had he permitted his wife to turn christian, because he was not willing, by crossing her desire, to breed a disturbance in his family: but said, he would have a great deal of following her example, for fear the world should be apt to believe that all his family was run mad.

Being naturally of a more spritely temper and brisker than your Chinese usually are, I endeavoured to win by fair means more than by disputation; at length, perceiving neither of them prove effectual, I went one evening to his house to see him, and taking him aside: I depart to-morrow, sir, said I, and am come to take my leave of you. I must needs confess, it is not without some sorrow, not only because I leave you, but more especially because I leave you in your errors. At least, before my departure, do me one small kindness; your wife is a christian, she hath an image of the God-man, whose religion I preach, do so much as prostrate yourself sometimes before this same image, and beseech him whom it represents, to illuminate your mind, if it be true, that he hath power so to do, and if he be capable of hearing you. He promised me he would do it, and presently after my back was turned he performed his promise.

His wife, ignorant of what had passed, seeing him upon his knees, adoring Jesus Christ by, often bowing his head before this image, supposed he was converted, and sent one of her relations into a house adjoining where I was, to acquaint me with it: I ran thither, and found him still so taken up in this action, and in prayer, that I durst not mind to interrupt him.

As soon as he rose from his knees, I told him, I could not sufficiently signify my joy to him, occasioned by the wonderful change God had lately wrought in him.

How! saith he, all amazed, did you see at such a distance what passed in my mind, or hath God revealed it to you? Jesus Christ himself, replied I, lets me understand it. ~~For~~ he acquaints us, that those who ask any thing of his Father in his name shall be heard. Oh! father, cried he, it is true, I am no longer the same man, I perceive myself a christian without yet knowing what christianity means, but pray instruct me, I am ready to submit, and to receive baptism this very moment if you please.

I told him, I baptised nobody before I had first instructed them, that, being obliged to depart, I would nominate a christian to whom he might have recourse in my absence. He consented to every thing, and we prostrated ourselves before this miraculous image, to return thanks to the Divine Majesty, who can, when he sees good, from the hardest stones raise up children unto Abraham.

Amongst several other effects of that grace, where with it hath pleased God to bless my mission, the conversion of an old officer in the army seems worth the relating to you. From a private centinal, he was got up to be the king's lieutenant in one of the cities of the third order, and, notwithstanding he was very rich, yet he never a concubine, his wife, being a christian, obliged him to live in a more regular manner than other Mandarines. But nothing could determine him to turn christian, not that he was bigotted to paganism, his desire of advancing himself in the world took up all his thoughts, and he had till that time never owned any deity but his fortune. This indifferency for all sorts of religion is of all conditions the most dangerous; and

I have found by experience, that a man is never at a greater distance from the true God, than when he acknowledges none at all.

Yet had he a great value for christians, because he edified by their innocent life. When I chanced to go to his city, he always made me a visit; and, because he thought it pleased ~~me~~, he ~~went~~ ^{came} sometimes into the church to sit ~~in~~ ^{near} the altars. I thereupon took occasion to try the business of his salvation home to him, but he heard the most serious things that I spoke to him thereupon with a smile.

One day, speaking to him of hell in a more terrifying manner than usual: You must not be surprised at my undauntedness, says he, it would be a great shame for an old officer as I am, to be afraid. Ever since I turned soldier I took up the resolution to ~~fear~~ nothing; but after all, saith he, what reason can I have to fear? I do nobody wrong, I serve my friends, and am faithful to the emperor, and, if heretofore I have been subject to the usual disorders of youth, I am at present temperate enough in my pleasures. That is as much as to say, reply'd I, that you strive to gratify the world, but you are no wise solicitous to render to God what you owe to him; could you imagine you should be a good officer, in discharging the particular duty of your calling, if you refus'd at the same time to obey and acknowledge the emperor.

'Tis not enough to be regular in all the actions of a private life; the principal duty ~~of a subject~~ is to submit to his sovereign, ~~and~~ the whole duty of a man is to own and fear God. You are in the right saith he, I do seriously think it. You think so in vain, reply'd I, if that God, ~~which I speak to you of~~, does not give good thoughts. Beg of him this evening to enlighten your understanding, ~~he will~~ hear your voice; but do you remember also to ~~listen~~ ^{listen} to him, and follow it.

Altho' I could hope no more from this discourse, than from several other preceding ones, yet I observed he was wrought upon. I mentioned some such thing to his wife, who took an occasion there upon to speak home to him, and one of his officers, being very zealous and well instructed, desired him at least to assist an evening prayer to be performed in his house. His presence stirred up the fervency of his domesticks, and they all begged of Jesus Christ, that he might be converted, with cries and tears, which the infinite goodness of the Almighty can scarce ever withstand.

From this very moment he began to waver, and the various thoughts he revolved in his mind a great part of the night, concerning the danger wherein he was, made him take up a resolution to go thro' with religion. But our Lord instructed him concerning it immediately, for, he seriously protested, that being a little sleepy, he had such horrible representations of hell, that he was no longer in suspense whether or no he should resolve. Upon his awakening, he found himself a christian, or, at least he took up a firm resolution so to be as soon as possible he could. He forthwith repaired to the church where I said mass, when it was finished, I was surprised to see him at my feet begging baptism of me, with his eyes bathed in tears weeping, I say, for scarce could he utter his mind, so much did his sighs and tears interrupt his discourse. He spoke likewise with a much more confidence, and there was observed, in his action, I know not what sort of fear that had seized him, of which he was not master. Whether it was that his imagination was still smitten with the representation of hell, or whether God by this change was pleased to make us, as well as him, apprehensive that all this bravery and haughtiness, that war in a captive of inspiring, is not proof against that saving horror which he darts (when it pleases him) into the most undaunted hearts. I

I had a great mind, according to my custom, to take some time to examine and instruct him, but he protested that he would not go out of the church till he was baptised: *Perhaps I shall die this very night,* said he to me, *and you would be grieved to know me eternally damned.* His resolution not to forsake me, the intreaty of christians, that went down to the ground to me to obtain this favour, and I know not what internal motion prevailed upon me. I examined him about every point of religion; he understood one part of it, and learned the rest with so much easiness, that two hours after I thought I could initiate him into our mysteries. His conversion made a great noise in the city, several idolaters followed his example; and, since in heaven itself there is rejoicing at the repentance of one sinner, there is no question but the saints and angels were joyful of the conversion of this very man.

This submission of our spirit to the obscurest mysteries, how difficult soever it may seem, yet is it not the thing that troubles the Gentiles most; several other considerations are greater rubs in their way. The first is the restitution of ill-gotten goods, which in reference to the merchants and Mandarines is an almost unsurmountable obstacle.

Injustice and cozenage are so common in China, in these two conditions, that few of them there are who have enriched themselves any other way. A merchant always puts off his wares at the dearest rate he can possibly, and never offers his good merchandize but when he can get rid of his bad. Cunning and craft, so peculiar to this nation, seem to intitle it to the right of sophisticating all things. But the sanctity of our religion doth not permit what human laws tolerate: a man, when he is become rich by unjust dealing, must come and make up his accounts with God, when he does in earnest think he is come to the knowledge of him. I must confess, that

that I never insisted upon this point but it made me tremble. This is for the most part a rock of offence to a Chinese

They do not boggle at the mysteries, nor ever call them in question, and the reason is, because they seem not cut out for speculative sciences. But as to the business of a merchant, they have a certain penetrating aptness, and think themselves little inferior to us

“It is very true,” says a merchant to me one day, “a man is not allowed to defraud or do wrong to his neighbour, but it is not I that cheat when I sell too dear, or when I put off my bad stuffs, the buyer abuseth himself. As he for his part desires to have them for nothing, or as little as he can, if I agree to it, so I likewise am in the right to exact large rates from him, and to receive them, if he be so simple as to give them me. This is the fruit of our industry, and this profit is no violence, but the effect of my calling, that teaches me to improve my trade

Moreover, adds he, altho’ it should be true that I should possess another man’s goods, and that I should have committed a fault by enriching myself at his cost, how can I have the conscience at present to strip my children naked and reduce them to beggary? Believe me, father, those, from whom I have extorted what they had, have, I’ll warrant you, done as much to others, who again have enriched themselves after the same manner. Here it is the custom of the Dutch, and every one in particular, (as they have any reason) ought mutually to pardon one another for these small faults, otherwise we must undo and overthrow whole families, and introduce a disorder worse than the mischief that one hath committed. As for my part, I freely pardon those who have chafed me, provided no body will molest me about the pretended wrong I have done him.”

This is the language of the children of darkness, of whom Jesus Christ saith; *That it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven.* Let a man represent to them what he pleases, yet they always have their own way, being more obdurate than blind; for they seldom fail of admiring justice and impartiality'd humour in others. See here an example of what I say, whereof I have been witness myself.

A young man travelling in the province of Xensi, where I chanced to be, found a purse upon the road, of about ten or twelve crowns; he had the honesty to inquire after the person to whom it belonged, that he might restore it. This was look'd upon as an heroic action by the Chinese; now the Mandarin of the place would not let him do it without a recompence; he made an encomium of it himself in a discourse that was printed in a large character, and affixed upon the palace gate.

But God Almighty, to whom even natural virtues are acceptable, was infinitely more gracious to this young man; for, proceeding on his journey, a person unknown to him accosted him, and said, how came it to pass that you restored the money so generously? Do not you know that it is none but the christians duty to do such things as these? And know, that, in the state wherein you are, all your moral actions will not hinder you from being damned; believe me, you will do well to go to the father of the christians, and embrace their religion, without which all your uprightness and natural equity will stand you no stead after death.

He immediately obeyed, and return'd back to find me out; he related to me, with abundance of modest simplicity, what had happen'd to him, and ever and anon he would be saying, What is it to be a christian? And what would you have me do? I instructed him with so much the more easiness, because he took nothing

nothing ~~in~~ in a word, he was endued with so much innocence and candor, that I was much taken with him; so that when I found him well disposed, I proceeded to the baptising of him, and put him in a way to sanctify his good inclinations for the future.

The devil, who understands the blind side of the ~~Chinese~~ as to ~~the~~ nature of interest, hath inspired the idolaters with a maxim that always retains them in their errors. The people fancy that one is christian enough if he be poor, and that christianity was the religion of beggarly fellows, so that if there happen any misfortune in a family, if there chance to be a christian in it, all others presently lay the blame upon him, and load him with their imprecations. One can not, without a strong faith, resist this persecution, and ~~as he~~ ~~one~~ proposes to an idolater, prepossess'd with this false idea, to embrace the christian religion, inward grace must be exceeding strong to oblige him to sacrifice his fortune, and to forsake, as he imagines, all his temporal interests.

This very reason sways almost with all the Mandarines, who venture all as soon as they think of becoming christians. Father Adam's fall, that drew along with it so many illustrious families in the late persecution; makes their hair still stand an end. They know that the religion of the Europeans is not approved of by the laws, and withal, that they may deprive all such as embrace it of their lives and fortunes. What protection soever the emperor may grant to the missionaries, he may hereafter revoke it, he may die, and the parliament watch all opportunities imaginable to root out christianity, so that the fear of losing the deceitful riches of this world deprives a multitude of people of eternal blessings, which they cannot sufficiently value, nor know the worth of.

But now if a Mandarin, who has any work of grace upon his heart, wave all these considerations, yet upon his conversion he meets with another
potable

notable obstacle to his perseverance, still more difficult to surmount than the former, since the pensions of the officers are not capable to supply the usual expences of their family, they have no other fund for to maintain it besides injustice.

The ministers of state, and chief presidents of sovereign courts of judicature of Yekin, do ~~understand~~ exact considerable sums from the viceroys, and these latter, to make it good, have recourse to the principal Mandarines of the province, who again lay a tax upon the subaltern officers none dare presume to dispense with it, without running into the danger of being quite undone, insomuch that every one of them, that he may maintain his post, gapes after getting money by hook or by crook.

This ministry of injustice, which the ambition of the grandes, and avarice of some of inferior rank, have introduced into the empire since the last revolution, gives a mortal blow to the establishment of our most holy faith upon a solid foundation, because a christian Mandarin ceases to be a good christian, if he fleeces and robs, or else he ceases to be a Mandarin if he do not cheat.

However, we meet with a great many of them, whom providence preserves, who have not bowed the knee to Baal. We have seen in China, as in the primitive church, some examples of this christian generosity, that count the goods of this world as nothing, in hopes that the kingdom of heaven will one day be their inheritance. ~~During the time of~~ the persecution there past an hundred things of this nature, that might afford matter of edification, but, being I set down nothing but what I have seen, I shall content myself to relate a more recent example which likewise much affected me.

A fervent christian, of the province of Xensi, after he had enriched himself in divers honourable employments, did at last retire from the world, resolving to lay

lay out one part of his estate in the service of God, and to dispose of the other in leading a peaceable and innocent life with his family. He had built a church in the country, whither I sometimes went to administer the sacraments, and baptise the catechists, whom he took special care to train up himself; but, ~~his house~~ standing in a place that was a great thoroughfare, the troops, that ~~are~~ continually going and coming ~~in China~~ laid all his grounds waste, not daring to do the least damage to those of his neighbour idolaters; and this is the reason that induced them to deal with him at this rate.

The Chinese are wont publickly to belch out curses against those that do them wrong, especially, if they cannot be ~~revenge~~ *revenge*d of them other ways. If a man ~~hath~~ been robb'd in his house, and one cannot discover the robber, every morning and evening, for several days together, the family's business is to curse him; the father, mother, children, and the servants take it by turns, and relieve one another in this exercise, and wish him all mischief imaginable; they have (if I may so express it) Formula's of foul language, and dire expressions, which they repeat an hundred times, bawling as loud as possibly they are able, at the gate, or upon the house-top; and they imagine that the robber will come to some harm by them, wherever he be, 'till such time as he hath made amends for the wrong.

Notwithstanding, there is not one of an hundred of these robbers, that give any heed to this tedious noise; yet, some there be that are frightened at it, and this fear prevents abundance of violence Christians, who love their enemies, and wish well to those that do ill by them, are far from cursing them; so that the soldiers that I told you of, fearing the curses of the Gentiles, spared their goods, and, fearing nothing from the wrath of this zealous christian, they plundered his house, stole his fruit, cut down his corn,

corn, and pluck'd up his trees; so you see his extraordinary patience drew upon him all the damage, which otherwise would have equally fallen upon others.

His friends, more concern'd at his losses than himself, often laugh'd at his insensibleness, and reproach'd him pretty much in the same manner as Job's friends did him on a such like occasion, telling him, that all his blessing of God would not secure him from losing his estate, and probably not from starving; *Benedic Deo & morere*, Bless God and die.

They were always telling him, that it was a strange thing, that, for the bare observance of his religion, he would see himself reduc'd to the utmost extremity, If so be, say they, you are afraid yourself to utter curses against those rogues, send one of your servants to do it for you, or else let out your estate to Gentiles, who will not be troubled with these ridiculous scruples.

This good man abounding in a lively faith, and that godly simplicity so conformable to the gospel, made answer, That all he had was at God's disposal, that he would preserve it; and that, upon the whole, he had rather receive hurt than do any. He told me one day, my children take it very ill, that I leave my house and goods, at sixes and sevens, to be plunder'd at this rate. You know I have my particular reasons to do thus, but they have none at all to complain, since the goods do not belong to them; they have wherewithal to live, without being beholding to any body, upon what I have reserved for myself; but altho' they should be in want, yet I had rather, when I come to die, leave examples of virtue for their portion, that contribute to the saving of their souls, than riches, that may make them lose them.

These sentiments, most reverend father, were such matter of joy, that I am not able to express it to

you

you. I said sometimes to myself, in the excess of my joy, *Is there more faith than that in Israel?* No, O Lord, I have lost nothing by leaving France, since I find some saints here; *thy Spirit hath indeed filled all the earth*, and that profound science of salvation, that we in Europe have enjoy'd for so many ages, begins at length to be spread abroad to the extremities of the world, by the stupendous efficacy of ~~thy holy word~~.

Nevertheless, because his children were very urgent with me, to find out some way or other to remedy this disorder, and that indeed it was convenient to prevent the Gentiles malice from prevailing over the Christians patience; I permitted them, on such occasions as these, to make use of threatenings instead of cursings; and to tell them, I wish you no harm; yea, and I forgive that you have done me; but God, who pleads my cause, knows how to punish, tho' I do not pretend to do it; the time will come, when you shall be smitten with all the anathema's that your unjust violence deserves, and that curse, he sends on you at present, will be to you the source of all the miseries which his law forbids me to wish to you: this expedient took effect, and the christians, growing eloquent for their own interest, did so lively represent the judgment of God, that the idolaters durst no longer blame them.

The second obstacle in my way, in converting the Chinese, proceeded from the multitude of wives which the laws of that country permit them; that is, in respect of the persons of quality only, who, besides their own wyes, take as many concubines as they are able to maintain; for, as to the ordinary sort, they have not wealth enough to allow this expence. The Mandarines are by their condition debarr'd from all other divertisements, they are permitted only to eat now and then with their friends, and give them a play; gaming, taking the air, hunting,
private

private visits, publick assemblies would be look'd upon in them as crimes of state; so that they seek no further than their house to find wherewithal to supply the want of those pleasures which the laws abridge them of.

Here and there one of them applies himself to study, as the surest means to advance him; but the greatest part of the Mandarin's compose a kind of seraglio, wherein they spend all ~~the time~~ that they can steal from their affairs. One may judge by that, how little they are inclined to deprive themselves of delights, to be satisfied with one wife, whose age, nay, and many times antipathy, have but already too much disgusted them.

It is true, those, who are converted, are permitted to take one of their concubines to wife, in case the lawful spouse hath not a mind to turn christian; but the laws prohibit them to do so: and in China, one cannot divorce his wife, except in some very few particular cases authorized by custom: moreover, the relations of her, whom her husband should have thus repudiated, would certainly be revenged on him, nay, and would force him by law to take her again; so that, when we propose to the Mandarin's the other difficulties of our religion, they dispute, they consider how to conquer them; they do not despair to do violence upon their inclinations; but this last point discourages them at first dash, and deprives them of all thoughts of being converted. I will give you a notable example of what I say.

I was going one day from one village to another, in pretty bad weather, and, making haste to get there in time, I heard an horseman behind, who gallop'd up to me; he was a man of between fifty and three-score, well mounted, and attended by some servants: as soon as he had overtaken me, he told me, that the great esteem, he had for the christian religion, gave him some thoughts of getting himself fully instructed therein.

therein, and that nothing could ever be able to divert him from this resolution, because he perceived in his mind a wonderful desire to embrace it. This ardency, saith I, sir, without all doubt comes from God; flesh and blood do not inspire such like sentiments into you, for my part, I am ready to assist you, I hope, on your part, you will be persuaded to follow the voice that calls you. We were afoot in the middle of a great highway, and, taking him aside a little, I began to instruct him. Every thing appeared rational to him; and, after having run over all the mysteries that are most difficult, I advised him to follow me into the church, whither it was my duty to go, when I call'd to mind that I had forgot the material point, I suppose, sir, added I, that you have no concubines, or, at least, you are resolved to send them packing, for, without doubt, you are not ignorant, that it is not allowed christians to marry several wives. The religion which I preach, and Jesus Christ taught, applies itself principally to wean our hearts from sensual pleasures, nay, and doth even sometimes exhort us, to deprive ourselves of those which reason permits.

How! saith he, startled at this, am I oblig'd (if I have any thoughts of being a christian) to turn off my concubines? Ah! what hurt is there in keeping them? What will people say of me in the world? What will become of my children? And what will become of myself? But, is that really an article which cannot be dispensed with? I endeavour'd to pacify him, and make him apprehend that he labour'd under a mistake, if, to overcome the difficulties of his conversion, he relied wholly upon his own natural strength, and present inclination. God, said I, who knows our corrupt nature, hath secret methods whereby to assist us, that we do not at first so much as dream of, endeavour only to keep alive that good will he hath granted you, he will accomplish the rest, you will find yourself changed in respect of this, as of all other things.

He listened to me a good while without speaking a word, but at length taking his leave of me on the sudden, and making a low bow, he mounts briskly on horse-back, puts spurs to his horse, and rides full speed towards the place from whence he came; I quickly lost sight of him, but methought I still saw him, so lively was his countenance for some time imprinted upon my spirit; and I am still quite disconsolate for losing a soul in an instant, ~~which the~~ grace of our Lord Jesus Christ had been so long preparing for me.

But now, in respect of womens conversion, it is much more difficult. A concubine, for example, acknowledged the verity of religion, and the miserableness of her state and condition; she had a great desire to come out of it, and receive baptism; it was told her, that the first step that faith acquir'd of her, was to live separately from her pretended husband, and to forsake her sins, so far she consents; nay, she desires it with all her heart; but to observe what she represents to herself: I belong to a Mandarin who bought me, if I go out of his doors he hath a right to claim me, and take me again, and inflict punishment upon me as his slave. If by good fortune I avoid his pursuit, whither can I retire to be in more security? My kindred, who sold me, dare not harbour me, and I shall infallibly fall into the hands of another person, who will engage me in the state that I seek to avoid; I must therefore remain in the house where I am; but how shall I be able to resist a brutish fellow, who only consults his passion, justified by the laws and example of the whole empire? It is to no purpose to lay before him the holiness of christianity that I desire to embrace; my intreaties, tears, yea, my resistance, and all the efforts that I, poor I, can make, are not able to hinder him; nevertheless, I am resolved to run away whatever it costs me; order me to do something, but pray do not refuse me baptism.

It so falls out sometimes, that an idolater, taking distaste at some extravagant caprichio of his christian wife, does wrongfully accuse her, and obtains leave, by the force of money, to sell her to another; yea, sometimes without any legal process of justice, he sells her, and retires into another province; this woman gets into the hands of another man; how can she avoid sin, receive the sacraments, and persevere in the faith? In truth, the missionaries are at their wit's end, having at that time no other course to take, but to go to prayer, that God, who sincerely desires the salvation of all men, would please to make use of those secret means, that his almighty power is wont to produce, when his ordinary providence, and the efforts of our good desires, prove ineffectual.

We have, most reverend father, so much the more reason to hope for these distinguishing favours from God in such like occasions, because he often grants them, even then when we do not judge them absolutely necessary. It is true, miracles are not so common in China, as the state of that empire would seem to require: The emperor, to whom we have related those which God hath been pleased to work in other nations, does sometimes reprove us for it. Are we, saith he, in a worse condition than the Barbarians, that have so frequently seen their sick healed, and their dead raised to life? What have we done to God, that he renders our conversion so difficult? You come from the utmost ends of the earth, to preach up a new law to us, contrary to nature, elevated above reason: Is it just, that we should take your word for it? Do some miracles that may warrant the truth of your religion, and I'll pass my word for the sincerity of our faith.

We have frequently told him, that God was the master and giver of these gifts, and that he distributed them according to the decrees of his eternal wisdom; that it is out of our sphere to fathom their

depth, that sometimes he did not work these prodigies in kings courts, because he foresaw the ill use they were likely to make of them, sometimes because giving them better parts and abilities, and more penetration than to others, these ordinary graces were sufficient for them, whereas the simple vulgar, and the rude, unciviliz'd nations, stood in need of the sensible marks of his almightiness, for the more easy discovering of the truth, yea, and it is more than probable also, that carnal prudence, which is at such enmity with the Spirit of the blessed Jesus, the softness, ambition, and luxury of great persons draw upon them this terrible chastisement, and that God in his just judgment refuseth miracles to persons who do themselves refuse to submit to the most plain and ordinary laws of nature

But, my lord (have some replied) the charity of that great number of missionaries, who joyfully forsake Europe, where their quality, estates, and their science ought naturally to detain them, who traverse a thousand dangers, to come hither to sacrifice themselves to the happiness of your people, and with so unbiassed and constant zeal, sir Is not there something of a prodigy in it? And should it not be as powerful to persuade you as miracles? If they be such knowing, learned men as your majesty allows them to be, how do they abuse themselves? And if they be wise, as you seem to think them, why do they abandon all the pleasures of this world, to come so far to deceive others, and all to no purpose? After all the reflections they have made this hundred years upon the different religions of China, there is not one of them, who hath not judg'd them all wholly contrary to reason, but, during so many ages that we have examined the christian religion, we have not observed amongst us one wise man, and of good morals, that hath suspected it of falshood. These answers do usually put him to a stand, and force

him to make certain reflections that do not a little disturb him

“In short, most reverend father, if miracles be wanting at Peking, the business is otherwise in the provinces, several are there wrought, and those of father Faber are so generally known, that it is somewhat difficult not to believe them, not that I go ~~about to~~ justify all that is related of those, nor of a great many more prodigies, which they relate on small grounds but, you’ll give me leave not to doubt of those whereof I myself have been witness, and peradventure, most reverend father, you rely so much upon my sincerity, as to be inclined to believe them likewise upon my testimony

In a village in the province of Xensi, near the city of San uyen, there lived an idolater, devout in his way, and extremely addicted to these superstitions at the time of full moon, he burnt commonly, in honour of his gods, gilded, or silver’d papers, wrapp’d up in different figures, according to the custom of the country One day, preparing to offer this kind of sacrifice before his gate, there arose a storm that forc’d him to retire into his house, where he lighted the said papers in the middle of a hall, without taking any farther care, but the wind, blowing open the gate, drove them up and down every where, and they had not time to prevent one part from flying into a stack of straw, which set fire on the house

People came running, but the conflagration became so furious, in a moment, that it was impossible to extinguish it The house, on one side adjoining to the idolater’s, belong’d to a christian, and by this time seem’d half encompassed with the flame driven furiously by the wind to be in danger of being quickly quite consumed This poor man, attended with divers others, got upon the house top, and did his endeavour, but all in vain, to defend himself from the conflagration, when his brother very confidently

came as near the fire as he durst possibly, and fell on his knees upon the tiles, and looking up to heaven, said, *O Lord, forsake not those that put their trust in thee; all that thou hast bestowed upon us is here; if we lose it, the whole family is reduced to the utmost extremity: preserve it, O my God, and I promise before thee, that I will assemble all the christians in the neighbourhood, and we will go to church together, to demonstrate my acknowledgment of the same.* Thereupon, he loosed a small relique from his chaplet, and threw it into the middle of the flames, that by this time cover'd part of the house.

This action, perform'd with such a sprightly air, did equally attract the attention of christians and idolaters, who, mightily astonish'd at their companion's confidence, expected the event of the business; when Heaven, all on a sudden, declar'd itself in a most miraculous manner: the wind, blowing violently, forthwith stacken'd, and a contrary wind, stronger than that arising at the same time, drove the violent streams of the flames to the opposite side, upon the house of a wicked false-hearted christian, that had lately abjured: it was consumed in a moment, becoming an example of divine vengeance, as the house, that Heaven preserved, was an evident token of his protection.

I was at that time six miles from the village. 'Tis true, my urgent business hindered me from being myself upon the spot; but I sent very credible persons thither, to be inform'd about it. The pagans, first of all, bore witness to the truth; and, some while after, the christians thereabouts, conducted by him who was lately heard in his prayer, appear'd in my church to fulfil his vow; where, with one accord, they echo'd forth the praises of the great God, who alone is able to cause his voice to be heard by the most insensible creatures, to the confusion of false gods, that are not themselves capable to hear the voice of rational creatures.

Some months after, there happened a thing no less surprising, the consequences whereof were very beneficial to religion. an idolater, of an indifferent fortune, felt himself assaulted with an unknown distemper, it was so catching, that his mother and wife shar'd in it likewise. two or three times a week he fell into fainting fits, which, at the beginning, look'd like swooning, and then turn'd again into cruel head aches, pains in the stomach and bowels, some times they found themselves extremely agitated, as if they'd had a fever, they lost the use of their reason, their eyes rolled in their heads, and men judged by several other unusual postures, that the devil had a hand in the matter.

They were the more persuaded to it, because they often found their house all put out of order, the chairs, tables, and earthen vessels overthrown, not knowing on whom to lay the fault. The physicians, whose interest it was to pass judgment, that nature on the one hand, and the malice of the people of the family on the other, were the cause of these several actions, made use of all their medicines to cure them. The Bonzes, on the contrary, assured them, that the devil was the author of the mischief, and demanded unreasonable alms to stop its course. So that the good people, abused on every hand, had thrown away all their estate, in four years time, up on the covetousness of these impostors, without finding any benefit. however, seeing the distemper afforded them some intervals, they sought up and down in the cities thereabouts, for new remedies for their griefs.

One day this idolater going for this purpose to the chief city, he found a christian upon the road, to whom he told his condition, and how miserably he was handled. No question, saith the christian, but it's the devil that torments you but you well deserve it, why do you serve so bad a master? We fear no

such thing, because we acknowledge one God, whom the devils adore; yea, they tremble before his image; and the cross only, that we wear about us, ^{hind}ers him from coming near us. If you will accept of a picture of Jesus Christ, and you and all your family will honour it, it will not be long before you see the effects of it; however it is soon tried, it shall cost you nothing, and you may judge by that, that I have no other aim but your benefit.

The idolater consented to it, and, hanging the holy image in the most honourable place of the house, he prostrated himself before it with profound respect, and begged every day, morning and evening, of our Saviour, that he would vouchsafe to heal his body, and enlighten his mind. His mother and daughter followed his example; and, from that very moment, the demons abandoned the place, of which Jesus Christ had taken possession.

These good people growing stronger and stronger in faith, as the evil spirit gave ground, began at last to think of being converted in good earnest. They came to inquire for me at Sigan, the usual place of my residence, and demanded baptism of me; they had already got themselves instructed; they had moreover got all the prayers by heart that we teach the late catechumens: but, their distemper making a great noise in the country, I was willing everybody should be witnesses of this conversion, and so went to the village myself, hoping this miracle might settle christianity therein, upon a solid basis.

Just upon my appearing, all the inhabitants followed me to the place where the image was still hanging; then I began to tell them, that they were not to question the verity of our religion, ^{Gr^t having him-}self spoken by a manifest miracle: ^{but} that I had caused them to assemble, to instruct and baptise them: For, in a word, what do you desire more to be convinced of the weakness of your gods, and the power

of our God^d the demon laughs at you, so long as you oppose him with nothing but idols, but he is not able to ~~hold~~ it out against the image only of the christians God. Do you imagine to escape this God after death, whose power hell owns, and whose justice it experiences every moment.

• The multitude interrupted me by a thousand ridiculous objections, which I easily answered, at last, somebody told me, that the devil had no hand in the malady in question; that, how extraordinary soever it appeared, it might proceed from several natural causes. That is, said I, the most rational thing you can say, but yet does no way extenuate the greatness of the miracles. Let the malady come from the devil, or from nature, I will not examine that, but it is certain at least, that the cure comes from God, whose image this man hath worshipped, and there is no less power requisite to cure natural distempers, than to drive out evil spirits. This reason should have made an equal impression on all minds, but grace, that acted differently in the hearts, gave place in some to voluntary obdurateness, whilst it triumphed over the obstinacy of others. Twenty-five persons at last gave glory to God, who alone worketh great marvels, *Qui facit mirabilia magna solus*, and were shortly after baptised.

These hauntings and infestations of demons are very ordinary in China amongst the idolaters, and it looks as if God permitted it so to be, to oblige them to have recourse to him. Some time after this accident, that I but just now related, a maid, just upon her marriage, was attacked with a complication of several diseases, which the physicians knew not what to say to, and which the Chinese are wont to ascribe to the demons. Her mother persuaded her to turn christian, and he, that was to marry her, promised to build a church to the God^d of the christians, in case baptism gave her any relief. as soon as ever this maid

maid had taken this course; she found herself not only relieved, but perfectly cured.

But her husband was so far from following ^{his} example, that he misused her several times for having obliged him to renounce his faith, for the Bonzes persuaded him, that this sickness was but a piece of artifice in his mother in law, and this fancy alone put him into such a fit of melancholy, that he was insupportable to the whole family, but especially to his wife, who, from that very instant, became an object of his aversion. It was in vain to represent to him his own mistake, and the malice of the Bonzes, for he always protested, that, if she would not take up her old religion again, he would lead her an ill life all her days.

God, to undeceive him, suffered the demon to torment his wife as before, so she relapsed into her former convulsions. She was more especially scared at the sight of a great company of spectres, that let her not have an hour's rest. Thus tossed up and down, abandon'd to her husband's inhumanity, that beat her cruelly, she in all appearance led a very uncomfortable life, yet, remaining immovable in her faith, God always upheld her, and temper'd and allay'd, by the inward sweetness of his grace, the bitterness of these afflictions, he comforted her likewise by sensible visitations, by his word and by the unspeakable cogitations that he from time to time infused into her soul. Inasmuch, that this condition, that gain'd her the compassion of all that knew her, was to her a foretaste of paradise. She express'd herself much what to this purpose to her mother, who related it to me with tears in her eyes, for her husband could not endure that I should see her.

At first, I gave little credit to this discourse, yet at length I was apt to believe there was something supernatural in it, for one day, coming to a city distant from the chief city, where I sojourn'd, about three

threescore miles, there I found this good woman with a great company of christians of the neighbouring towns, which she had taken care to get together, being confident that I would come at the very minute that she had fix'd in her mind, and it fell out accordingly. It much surpris'd me to see her there, for, I had no design to come thither; and it was only by chance that somebody had, about five or six hours before, made me resolve to come thither, so that nobody could give her notice of this my resolution. I took her in private, to learn of her how she came to know this; she told me, that her daughter, after a violent assault of a demon, had been visited by our blessed Lord; that, when this extasy was over, she advis'd her to acquaint the christians, and bring them to this village, for without all peradventure I would come thither on such a day: In fine, added she, not being able to come thither myself, and seeing my sins render me unworthy to partake of those sacred mysteries, pray desire the father to offer up the holy sacrifice of the mass for me, and the conversion of my husband. This poor mother, relating to me this accident, wept bitterly for the present state of her daughter; nevertheless, the accomplishment of this prophecy comforted and built her up in her most holy faith. I cannot tell what happened since that time, for the necessity of my affairs oblig'd me to leave that province.

The extraordinary things that I have seen, the zeal of the christians, and the inclination of idolaters to be converted, inspir'd me with an affectionate zeal for their salvation, and I heartily wish to bestow the remainder of my life upon the cultivating this precious ~~portion~~ of our Lord's inheritance: but some superior reasons, which I am bound to obey, snatch me from it fore against my will; at this separation, I was more sensible than ever of my loss.

These good people, so affectionate to their pastors, were almost ready to offer violence to me; but, understanding that they could not detain me without opposing the will of God, they abandon'd themselves to sorrow, and gave such abundant marks of their affection, that I myself never shed more real and bitter tears: they waited for me upon the highway in crowds, where they had spread tables from space to space, covered with all sorts of fruits and confectionaries. It was sometimes necessary to make a stop, not to eat, but to hear their complaints, and to comfort them, for leaving them *as sheep without a shepherd*. They made me promise them to return as soon as possible, or to send them somebody in my place. Thus I took my leave of these fervent christians, melted with their tears, but much more edified with their faith and the innocence of their lives.

God, who knows the violence I committed upon myself, comforted me by an eminent conversion he vouchsafed to work at the farthest limits and left vil-
lage of this province. There is something in it so sig-
nal that I cannot forbear relating it.

I departed from Sigan the metropolis of this province upon the eve of a considerable festival of our Lady, which I was naturally engaged to spend in that church, where the multitude, and devotion of believers invited me to say mass that day, and to administer the sacraments to them, being the last time I was likely to do it; yea, and the publick edification did even seem to require it of me, every one in general desired I would; and, I don't know how contrary to reason, I was very obstinate and resolute not to delay my journey a minute; but the truth is, I felt inwardly I know not what internal motion that would not give me leave to stay any longer; nay, more than that, in spite of the superstition of the Chinese, who observe lucky and unlucky days to begin jour-
nies, I made my idolater guides to depart on a day

mark'd in the kalendar for an unfortunate one. They were surpris'd at this precipitation, yea, and I myself, reflecting afterwards upon it, could not choose but condemn it, not understanding then by what spirit I was influenced and impuls'd, but God let me presently understand it. On the fourth day after my departure, I continued my journey, and I was just upon my arrival in the very farthest city of the province of Xensi, when a man that rid post, passing just by me, fell to the ground, and by his fall was like to have turn'd me over on the other side. This accident stopp'd me a little, and afforded time to the traveller, who was got up again, to take a view of me.

Notwithstanding the multitude of passengers was great, yet, my long beard and European mien made me presently be known to be a missionary. I am very fortunate, says the man immediately, to meet with you; that accident, that happened to me, spares me the labour of a long journey, and will engage you to a good deed. My master, who lives not above half a league from hence, order'd me to ride post to Sigan, to engage you to come to him, he hath been indispos'd these several months, and we are apt to believe that he seriously thinks of being converted. I quickly left the highway to follow him, and we reach'd the house at one o'clock in the afternoon.

He was a doctor of high renown by his extraction and understanding, living formerly at Peking, but banish'd some years before into Xensi, for I know not what bad business, the time of his banishment expired, and he was resolv'd to return to court, as soon as his health should permit him to take his journey; for he did not look upon his distemper to be dangerous. The fever had left him, and besides a cough that troubled him now and then, and made him still keep his bed, he perceiv'd no considerable inconvenience.

His servant being just departed, when he saw me come into his house, he was seized with astonishment, as if God had transported me into his house in a moment: Is it possible, cries he, all in tears, that Heaven should work wonders for such a wretch as I am? God hath solicited me these many years to go to him, without receiving any thing from my hardness of heart; 'tis but a moment since I begged of him to come to me in the person of one of his ministers; he not only hears me, but does even anticipate my desires. This is somewhat beyond the power of nature, and this favour does the business of my change. You know by that, father, that this great God is concerned in my salvation, and that it is his pleasure that you should contribute something to further it. Then proceeding, You see, saith he, my wife, children, and daughter, they have been all christians a long time ago; and I can say, that God hath made use of me as an instrument to undeceive them of their errors. I have given them your books, I have explained the maxims and morality of it to them, for the facility, which your religion inspires, persuaded me I should have a wellordered family, as soon as it should be a christian family. I was not mistaken, and my conscience would not have given me the lye, had I followed their example; but I have a long time laboured to procure their welfare, and could never find in my heart to consult my own: now it is high time to follow that way I have shewed to others. The court, whither I am going, is not a proper place for conversion; and I thought it was my duty, *whilst it is called to day*, to seek God, for fear the hurry of the world, wherein I am going to engage, should hinder me from finding him hereafter.

All his family, which came about us upon this, wept for joy; but that, which affected me most, was that fervency I saw expanded in the eyes, countenance, and in all the motions of the sick person. I

had taken no refreshment, and it was near two of the clock, and I was desirous to defer his baptism till after dinner, but I found it impossible to obtain any delay. I therefore began to examine him, and he was ready to answer to all the articles of religion, that I yielded at length to all his urgent intreaties I baptized him, and he accompanied the whole action with such ardent and lively meditations of love, humility, faith, and hope, that nothing in all my life did ever so much demonstrate to me what the holy Spirit is able to do in a heart, when it alone pleases to take it to task, without the assistance of its ministers. Some while after I left him alone full of consolation, and retired to a chamber to take a little repose, of which I had extreme need.

But scarce had I been there half an hour, but I heard great cries in all the family. They called for me every where, and, running upon the noise to the sick man's chamber, I found him expiring in the embraces of his wife and children. I endeavoured to put him in mind of the last thoughts of baptism, he still repeated with a languishing note the names of Jesus and Mary, but yet he received the extreme unction in a manner insensible, after which he calmly gave up the ghost. All those that were present cried, O it was a miracle! and recollecting what had happened at my departure, upon the road, and in the house, they did no longer question but that all that had been managed by an overruling providence, that had made use of all these secret methods, for to procure him a blessed exit.

At that time the Spirit of the Lord seized upon all hearts, nobody wept, the spiritual joy was so universal, that nothing was heard any where but blessings, praises, and thanksgivings, to that gracious God, that had but now wrought such stupendous miracles in his servant. What is to be most admired is, that there was not observed in him that deformity

deformity that death commonly leaves behind it ; but, on the contrary, I know not what air of sweetness and devotion seemed display'd over his countenance, and did sufficiently intimate the blessed state of his soul. He was laid in state, according to the custom of that country, where I found him the next day twenty hours after just as he was ; his hands and arms besides were as flexible as if he had been but in a slumber.

Thus God, by one of those many profound secrets of his predestination, vouchsafes to enlighten a soul sometimes in the midst of the darkness of idolatry, and snatch it from the jaws of hell by a continual series of miracles ; whilst millions of others, educated in the bosom of the church, are, by his just judgment, given over to a reprobate mind.

These are, most reverend father, the most extraordinary things that have happened to me, during the small time that I have had the care of the mission of Xensi: If I mention not what passed in the other provinces of China, it is not because God doth not work such like miracles therein, but by reason I have no exact memorial of them, I was afraid, lest, relating upon hear-say, I should be deficient in some considerable circumstances ; and I had rather let them be set down in writing hereafter, by those who are better informed than myself.

This I can add over and above, to give you a more exact account of what good there hath been done in the empire. There are above two hundred churches or private chapels, dedicated to the true God, and governed by certain ecclesiastical superiors ; Pekin, Nankim, and Macao have each its particular bishop, by the nomination of the most serene king of Portugal, who, by his zeal and liberalities, continues to uphold christianity throughout all the East, which all his predecessors have there established with so much glory.

The other provinces, when I departed, were under the jurisdiction of three apostolick vicars, * one whereof is an Italian of the order of St Francis, † the two others are ecclesiasticks, Frenchmen by nation, doctors of the Sorbonne, of singular worth, the missionaries, that labour under their order, are likewise of different nations. There are four ecclesiasticks of the seminary of foreign missions of Paris, amongst whom the abbot of Lionne is very eminent for his zeal and application to the study of languages, they reckon much about the same number of fathers of St Dominic, twelve or fifteen Franciscans, and three or four of the order of St Augustin. all these monks are Spaniards, and come into China by Manille.

• The jesuits who founded this mission, and who by the extraordinary favours of his majesty the king of Portugal, as well as of the emperor of China, have been in a capacity to make considerable settlements, do maintain a great number of missionaries there, there were about forty of them at the time of my departure. Since that time the fathers Grimaldi and Spinola † brought several others thither. But what signify forty or thie score labourers in such a vast field? May it please the Master of the harvest to hear the voice of those that labour therein, who, groaning under the burthen and heat of the day, beg relief. or, at least, may he please to shed abroad abundantly upon us that first spirit of the gospel, which, in one apostle alone, was sufficient heretofore to convert the greatest empires.

Not but that the present state of the church doth afford matter of consolation, to those who are concern'd for the glory of Jesus Christ. They labour with no small success, nay, there are but few missionaries, that do not baptise every year three or four

• The reverend father de Lamoignon † Monsr N'ogret
and monsieur P. † Father N, was died by the way
F f hundred

hundred persons; insomuch, that in five or six years they reckon above fifty thousand idolaters converted. Besides that, they baptise every year four or five thousand children in the streets of Peking, which they go to look for every morning from door to door, where we find them half perish'd with cold and hunger; nay, sometimes half eaten up by dogs. If they should do no more good but this, the missionaries would think themselves well enough rewarded for all the pains they take.

But that, which ought to animate us to cultivate this mission better than all others, is the hope one day to convert the emperor; the change of whose religion would infallibly be followed by the entire conversion of the whole nation; so that although we should wait for this happy moment three or four ages, without any other profit than what we hope for, in time to come, we should be too happy in preparing by our patience the way of the Lord in this new world, which perhaps will make better improvement of the faith, than our successors shall bring to it, than Europe does at present of that our forefathers intrusted it withal.

In short, altho' amongst the christians that are in China, we can reckon no more princes and ministers of state since the last persecution of father Adam; yet, for all that, we baptise every year Mandarines, doctors, and other persons of quality; yet it is true, that the common people make up the greatest number: *Non multi potentes, non multi nobiles.* And it is no news to own, that the poor have always been the elect portion and precious inheritance of Jesus Christ in the church.

The main body of christians is in the province of Nankim, and more especially in the territory of Cham-hu; but the faith is more lively in the provinces of Quamtum, Peking, Xens, and Xansi. Their proportion as many Tartarians as Chinese christians; these

these are more docile, and much easier to be converted, yet in the time of temptation they have not half so much courage. The Tartars, on the contrary, being naturally of a brisk temper, do not easily stoop under the yoke of the gospel, but those, over whom grace hath once triumphed, are endued with a virtue that is proof against the forest persecutions. As for women, which we see more rarely, ~~altho' they~~ be less instructed than the men, yet their innocence, their constant attendance at prayer, their blind submission to the precepts of faith, and the most harsh and severe practices of christian pety, do in some measure supply their defect of knowledge, as to the particulars of our mysteries.

• It were to be wish'd, that the beauty and ornament of our churches might answer the devout fervour of christians. but, besides that the Chinese are no great architects, this novel christianity, so frequently shaken by persecutions, composed for the most part of the poorer sort of people, only tolerated by the bye, and always forced to observe a great many punctilio's, and keep within bounds, hath not yet been in a condition to rear magnificent temples. Nevertheless it is matter of astonishment, that the missionaries, with such a pitiful fund as theirs is, should be able on this score to do so much.

• The church of Pekin is very well built, the frontispiece, the stones of which were laid by the missionaries themselves, is very proportionable and pleasing. Those in Kiamcheu, Chum hai, and Jo heu, that which the fathers have at Canton, and divers others are as fine as our ordinary churches of Europe, but the church of Hamcheu was so very pretty and neat, that one could not enough admire it. you could see nothing but gildings, paintings, and curious pictures, it was all over adorn'd with them, yea, and there was a great deal of symmetry and order in the whole. The delicate red and black varnish, which the Chi-

nese are so expert at, to which they give a particular relief or embossment, by the flowers of gold and other figures wherewith they enrich it, did produce the finest effect in the world to compleat the whole.

But this goodly church, the product of christians devotion, and of father Intorcetta's zeal, is 'lately reduc'd to ashes by a dreadful conflagration, that consum'd one quarter of the city; and, in all probability, we shall not be in a capacity a long time to perform any thing like it. Nevertheless it will be our comfort to support us after this loss, if it shall please our blessed Lord to destroy, at the same time, that pack of idols which have overflow'd the whole empire; and that he will vouchsafe to raise himself living temples in the hearts of the new believers; where he may be worshipped in spirit and truth; wherein, for want of ours, they may offer to him the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving.

I shall not entertain you, most reverend father, concerning the transactions of the Indies, where the revolution of a huge kingdom, the jealousies of some Europeans, together with the continual thwartings of hereticks, have broken all the measures that christian prudence oblig'd us to take for the cause of religion; so that the most part of the French missionaries have been hitherto more conspicuous by their sufferings, than by their conversion of idolaters.

Some of them, after having lingered out several years in the most darksome prisons, scarce begin to see the light, and are not yet in a condition even to exercise their functions with any freedom. Others, driven from their settlements, wander up and down upon the most tempestuous oceans, carrying along with them the miserable remainders of their ruined missions; and, that they may return to the remotest parts of the world, they commit themselves a fourth time to the mercy of the waves and their enemies.

Several

Several buried in shipwracks, or worn out with toils, have gloriously finish'd their course, and, tho' their companions live still, it is only to consume by little and little the sacrifice of their lives, by the ill habit of body they have contracted by their first labours.

You see, most reverend father, what sort of persons they be I speak of, you know their names, you understand their worth, and, since they were chosen from amongst a great many other candidates for the East Indies, you have been pleas'd always to honour them with a most particular affection and, may I be bold to add, that you were not satisfied with only sending of them, you follow'd yourself in some respect, and became the fellow, or rather the head of their apostleship, sharing, like one of the most zealous missionaries, in the success of their holy undertakings, zealously lending an helping hand to their labours, delivering them from their chains by a powerful protection, or, at least, lightening the weight by consolatory letters, full of that lively hope that makes a man take delight in the most rigid persecutions.

This courage, most reverend father, which you have inspir'd into us, does not only alleviate our sufferings, but also assures us, that the ruins of this grand edifice, that we have laid the first stone of to the glory of God, will one day serve for a basis to another work, yet more considerable and solid than the first, so that neither the shipwreck of * three of our brethren buried in the sea, nor the loss of † three more, who sacrificed their lives aboard the vessel in relieving the sick, nor yet the death of a great many more whom the fatigues of the mission have snatch'd from us in the Indies, nor the prisons of Pegu, Siam, Moluccas, Batavia, Rotterdam nor Middleburg, where pagans and hereticks have tried our patience

* Barnaby, Throuvil, Ni art
Serls. Dandy

† Re bitt, le Blanc

by turns all that, I say, does not blunt the edge of our courage, being fully persuaded that Jesus Christ hath made use of the cross to propagate and establish religion so the missionaries cross is always to be the foundation of their churches, and, as it were, the seed of new christians

In the mean time, these first labours have not been altogether in vain, we baptised at Boudychery above four hundred idolatrous children the people of ~~Coromandel~~ ^{Coromandel} have been relieved, as were those of Ceylon, Pegu, and Bengala. They labour'd with no small success in divers provinces of the empire of the great Mogul, and, above all, in the missions of Madura. Such missions, as in them we see in our days the ages of the primitive church reviv'd; wherein believers, wretchedly poor and depriv'd of all the comforts of life, seem to live only by their faith, hope, and charity, wherein the missionaries, to comply with the customs of the country, and obtain the people's favour, spend their lives in forests and deserts, half naked, scorched by the sun beams, and walk, for the most part, upon scalding hot sands; where upon the ways, full of briars and thorns, they take no other sustenance but a little rice, with some insipid plants, and no other beverage, but yellow muddy water from the ditches and marshes

These are the

Perhaps, most reverend father, this portraiture will not please the men of this world, not being ready to bestow upon sufferings the just value they deserve, *and to sever the things that are of God*; yet I know, that will not abate the zeal of our fathers living in France, who have so many years aspir'd to toilsome and tedious employments.

The missions, in respect of them, have so many ~~more~~ allurements, as they appear to others more hideous and frightful: if they expected to find in the Indies only common crosses, whereunto providence makes every kingdom subject, but wherewith Jesus Christ hath in a special manner enrich'd christianity, they would have been contented with their recluse religious way of living; and, with the eminent virtues practis'd therein, they would never perhaps have had the least thought of leaving their friends, relations, and country. But they seek, elsewhere, what we here want of the passion of Jesus Christ, according to the apostle's counsel, and they are willing to fill up the whole extent, the breadth and depth of this divine law, which carries them out, with St. Paul, to become victims of the most pure charity, even so far as to be anathemised, that their brethren may be saved.

Yet these are those apostles, most reverend father, whom envy sometimes, in France, paints out to us in such black colours, whom heresy, evermore opposite to true zeal, so often accuseth of ambition, avarice, impiety, and idolatry; they are too happy in being ~~such~~, that all the shots of calumny level at, provided they have none for their enemies, but the enemies of the church and truth; and, without doubt, the war, that such adversaries declare against them, with so much heat and animosity here in Europe, does no less justify them, than that which they themselves declare against paganism in the Indies.

Nevertheless, what justice soever wise men may do them in this point, yet it is most true, that that does not suffice to justify them before God, before whom the very angels are impure; after all the efforts of our zeal, we must not only acknowledge in all humility, that we are unprofitable servants, but confess like-wise, with thoughts full of horror, that it is in vain to win over all the nations upon the earth to Jesus Christ, if in the mean time we be so ~~sluggish as to~~ neglect our own salvation, and unfortunately lose ourselves. I am, with a profound respect,

Most Reverend Father,

Your most humble

and most obedient Servant,

L. J.

L E T T E R XIII.

To my Lord Cardinal de Janson.

*The Christian Religion newly approved of by a publick
Edict, throughout the whole Empire of China.*

My Lord,

IT seems as if Heaven, sensible of the labours of our missionaries, who, for these several years, have, with the sweat of their brows, watered China, had a mind, at length, to establish this new church upon a solid foundation. Hitherto it hath been subject to abundance of revolutions, flourishing under the reign of some emperors, persecuted in the time of their minority, and, in a manner, totally ruin'd during the

the intestine commotions; but always in a tottering condition, by reason of the rigour of the laws, that have permitted a right to destroy it, even to those that have the most defended it.

For the sovereign courts of China, declar'd enemies to all foreign worship, rather out of a spirit of policy, than any sincere affection to the religion of the country, have frequently condemned the christian doctrine, and punish'd those who had the courage to embrace it. Several of them, for all that, hearkened to the voice of God, rather than to the voice of man; but the greatest part, apprehending danger as to their fortune, were so far from pursuing the known truth, that they durst not so much as get themselves instructed therein.

It is a matter of an hundred years, that we have labour'd to remove this almost invincible obstacle to the conversion of great persons. The hour of the Lord was not yet come, he was pleas'd to exercise the patience of his christians, to try the constancy of the missionaries, and thereby inance the worth of them both. But now at last the happy day begins to dawn, and the emperor hath granted an intire liberty of conscience to his subjects, by allowing in a publick edict the christian faith throughout the whole extent of his empire.

Thou hast, O Lord, broken thy chains that held thy holy religion captive, now can we offer sacrifices, and call publicly upon thy name; we present to thee our vows, not in secret as formerly, but in presence of all the people, in the temples they suffer us to rear to thy glory, who are about to change the old Babylon into the new Jerusalem. Here I do present you, my lord, with the occasion, and the whole continued series of this happy event.

Father Alcala, a Spanish Dominican, one of the most zealous missionaries in China, had purchased an house at Lanki, a little village of the province of

Chekiam, notwithstanding this settlement was expressly against the edict of 1659; the Mandarin of the place, who at first did not oppose it, being afterwards nettled at some indiscreet words, that escaped unawares from some of this father's menial servants, was resolv'd not to dissemble the matter any longer, but to proceed according to the course of law against him.

He therefore asked the missionary, how he ~~dares~~ presume to settle in the city? Why he preach'd up a foreign doctrine? And moreover, by what right he pretended to remain in the empire? This father foresaw the storm gather, and had prepar'd himself before-hand: 'I wonder, my lord, says he, in answer to the Mandarin, that you reckon that criminal in me at present, that you did not disapprove at the beginning. You know that for some years' the emperor hath kept and preserv'd in the empire five of my European brethren (he meant us) that he hath not only sent for them to court, but also hath by a publick edict granted them power to settle in whatsoever place of the kingdom they shall think fit: it is for one of them that I have bought this house, and I lodge in it till such times as he come himself to take possession of it.

'Moreover, you cannot be ignorant that the missionaries had liberty granted them to come ~~again~~ into their churches, when the emperor did them the favour to recal them from their banishment. Consult, I pray, consult your registers upon the business, and there you will find my name.

'Some months after another Mandarin, solicited by him of Lanki, or at least urg'd to it by his example, was resolv'd to put a stop to the progress of our holy doctrine; he prohibited the exercise thereof through the whole extent of his government, by an order, which he caused to be affixed in diverse places. They treated religion in such a despightful manner, that

that father Intorcetta of our society, and missionary in the metropolis of this province, thought himself oblig'd not to dissemble the affront without betraying his ministerial function

• He supposed likewise, that he had a right on his side formally to accuse this sworn enemy of the gospel, whose behaviour was so excentric from the emperor's intentions; for this prince had blotted out with his own hand a great many lines of a book that ranked the christian doctrine in the number of dangerous and popular heresies this book was of moment, not only by reason of its author, eminent for his quality and desert, but much more, for that it was composed for the people's instruction, by whom it was to be read, according to the custom, several times a year

• Father Intorcetta did therefore judge it a piece of boldness, that made the Mandarin liable to the lash, to condemn, by his private authority, that which the emperor seemed to allow of and approve, so that the father writ a very smart pithy letter to the governor of the capital city, in which he desir'd him to cause this subaltern officer to retract his words, and so get this injurious writing to be torn in pieces he likewise added that, to repair this fault, he could wish that the Mandarin might affix other papers in the place of those, more favourable to the religion, and more conformable to the emperor's intentions

• The governor dispatched this letter to the Mandarin, and, as ill luck would have it, it was deliver'd to him upon a day that he heard causes, in sight of all the people. At the very time that he was busy in passing judgment He so much resented this affront, that contrary to the custom of the Chinese, and maugre his natural phlegm, he started from the bench transport'd with choler, complain'd of the impudence of the missionary, and protested openly, that he would be reveng'd

That he might carry on the business more successfully, he associated himself with the Mandarin of Lan-ki, and combin'd with him, if possible, utterly to destroy the christian religion. Their first attempt was to assault the Dominican friar, on whom they thought more easily to accomplish their design; for they could not imagine, that he was of the number of the ancient missionaries. To be rightly inform'd of the matter, they caused to be produced certain authentick copies of every procedure during the whole course of the persecution against father Fii (for so was he called) with a design to confront him with himself.

It is a peculiar trick, pretty common in China, with the Mandarines, to question the criminals not only about matters of fact, but also concerning abundance of insignificant circumstances, causing all they answer carefully to be taken in writing. Then, when they have talked a pretty while of a matter quite foreign to the subject in hand, to distract their mind, all on a sudden they return to the thing in question; they begin over and over the declaration; they change the order of the interrogatives, and cunningly interpose answers contrary to those the guilty person made, on purpose to make him contradict himself, the more easily to sift out the truth.

Father Alcalá, without all doubt, would have been put to his trumps, if he had not, by a particular providence, preserv'd a copy of these ancient proceedings. Wherefore, knowing the intent and design of his judges, he so well inform'd himself of all that had heretofore past to this purpose, and deliver'd himself so pertinently, and conformably to the first interrogatory, that his enemies were never able to prevail over him, as to his answers.

So that all the storm fell upon father Intorcetta again, against whom they were much more animated and incens'd; but, soasmuch as this father did not live within their jurisdiction, they suborned many
 confide

considerable Mandarines, and the viceroy in particular, who added to his absolute power in the province a greater aversion for the christian religion.

They all unanimously resolv'd to beat down christianity, and after having caused all the proceedings, formerly made against missionaries, to be sought out in the archives of the intendant of the city government, they found at last the decree of 1669, that strictly prohibited them to build any churches, to teach in publick or in private the European law, to administer baptism to the Chinese, to distribute medals, chaplets, crucifixes, or other such like tokens of religion, to christians.

The missionaries were not ignorant of these prohibitions; but their particular zeal, and the example of Pekin, where the gospel was preach'd under the emperor's very nose, no body pretending to say any thing against it, put them upon waving the usual rules of human prudence. These very considerations made most part of the Mandarines to connive, and, whenever any one of them took upon him to impede the progress of the faith, they endeavour'd to pacify him by presents, and letters of recommendation procur'd for us by the fathers of Pekin; or else, if need required, we made use of the emperor's authority against him.

The christians of Hamcheu, under the cure of father Intorcetta, were none of the least zealous. Their courage had appear'd under the government of divers Mandarines, great sticklers against our most holy faith, but their courage was never more apparent than in the present occasion, for the viceroy supposing, that he was empower'd to undertake any thing by virtue of the decree aforementioned, caused to be affix'd to the gate of our house, in all the public places of the capital city, and afterwards in above seventy cities of his government, a new sentence, by which he forbade under grievous penal-

ties, to exercise the christian religion, charging all those that embraced it to forsake it *.

Moreover, being informed, that father Inforcetta was formerly in the province of Kiamsi, and that he had not obtained leave from the court to settle in that of Chekiam, he sent to ask him by what authority he durst presume to stay there; yea, and he commanded him forthwith to avoid the country; the officer, that brought this order, added, I command you withal, in the name of the viceroy, to burn all the books of your religion, together with the tables of printing, that you have in your house. They are thin boards, upon which they have engraven all the leaves, from which they may take copies, according as occasion serves.

The father, not at all surpriz'd, answer'd, That he was in the city by the authority of him who granted the privilege to the viceroy himself, to remain there: 'Have you forgot, added he, that the emperor, passing this way three years ago, sent two grandees of his court to my church, to offer presents, in his name, to the true God, with express orders, to lie prostrate before the altars? I went to render him my most humble thanks for his gracious favour; and, that I might give him further demonstrations of my acknowledgments, I was willing to accompany him upon the canal at his departure, where he was with his whole court.

'This grand prince, who had formerly honoured me with more than ordinary demonstrations of his benevolence, taking notice of my barge amongst a great number of others, caused it to approach his own, and spoke to me such obliging things, that, after all that, I could not suspect I should be exposed to any straits, or insults from any one of his officers.

'But, since this example hath made no impression upon the spirit of the viceroy, go tell him, That

* This happened about the middle of August, Ann. 1691.

the

the emperor, not being willing I should accompany him any farther, sent me back with these his last words to me, which are too advantageous to me to presume to alter, add, or diminish any thing in them. Your years, says he to me, do not permit you to attend me any longer, you are no way in a condition to endure the fatigues of a journey, I order you to return to your church, and there to spend the remainder of your days. But, now, if the viceroy does not only disturb this tranquillity by ordinances injurious to the God whom I adore, but forces me shamefully to quit this province, I leave him to judge, whether of us two does more openly and peremptorily contradict the emperor's will and pleasure.

As to what relates to the table, on which they have engraven the law and maxims of Jesus Christ, God forbid I should be so wicked as to commit it to the flames. However, the viceroy is the master, since I cannot resist his violence, but tell him from me, that, before he resolve upon that, he must begin with the burning of myself.

The viceroy, surpriz'd at the undauntedness of the missionary, durst attempt nothing upon his person, but he referr'd the business to certain subaltern Mandarines, who received orders, to summon the missionary before their tribunals, and to perplex and trouble him upon all accounts, without allowing him a moment's respite. Father Intorcetta, who just then fell sick, might have been dispens'd with from appearing, but he was afraid to lose these precious junctures of time; that providence had put into his hand, openly to confess the name of Jesus Christ, and being resolv'd not to recoil, or give ground during the combat, he got himself carried before judges, much oppress'd, by reason of the malady he labour'd under, and much more at the sight of his desolate church but, besides he was so animated by the holy

holy Spirit, wherewith martyrs are corroborated, that, of all the Mandarinés that interrogated him, not one of them but admir'd the greatness of his courage.

So that, in despite of the vigorous orders of the viceroys, every one of them almost treated him with abundance of deference; even to that degree, that one of them caused an officer of justice to be soundly bastinado'd in open court, for having been wanting in his respect to the father. Adding withal, that indictments do not render a man guilty; and that he must have been convicted, to deserve to be treated as a malefactor.

Father Intorcetta, presently foreseeing that the persecution would be violent, had written to the missionaries at court, to the end that they might remedy it. The emperor was then in Tartary, where he diverted himself in hunting. Father Gerbillon, a Frenchman by nation, and one of those the king sent to China, accompanied this prince thither, by whom he was particularly beloved, retaining him almost always near his person; so that the letters were directed to him.

This father did not judge it convenient to speak of it to the emperor, but contented himself to desire a letter of recommendation from prince Sogor, one of the most powerful ministers of the empire, and his particular friend, who immediately wrote to the viceroy in a most effectual manner. He presented to him, that such a procedure, as his was, smelted somewhat of violence, and was inconsistent with his wonted moderation and prudence. We live in a time, saith he, that requires much gentleness and discretion. The emperor seeks all occasions to favour the doctors of the christian law, how can you possibly think to please him in persecuting that? Believe me, sir, the example of a prince ought to make a greater impression upon our spirits, than all the decrees of courts of judicature, and the ancient edicts,

edicts, that the court itself can no longer follow; ought not at present to be the rule of its conduct. If you say to the missionaries, reckon that the emperor will take it kindly from you; and, if I may be permitted to subjoin any thing to this last motive, be assured also that I shall resent all the good offices you render them upon my recommendation.

Prince Sofan is so considerable thro' the whole empire (whether it be by the honour he hath to be a near relation to the emperor, or whether by his place of grand master of the palace, or whether by his credit or capacity) that upon any other occasion the viceroy of Chekiam would have looked upon it as a great favour to receive one of his letters, and would not have balanced one moment to satisfy him; but passion had blinded him, and the vexation, to perceive himself less powerful at court than a stranger, inclined him to let the missionary understand, that he was at least the master in his own province.

Wherefore, he began to seize upon several churches which he bestowed upon the priests of the pagan gods, after he had violently taken away the sacred monuments of our religion.

He issued out proclamations much more rigorous than the former, he threatened the father with his indignation if he did not abandon his flock, and he caused several christians, that had but too openly declared themselves, to be apprehended; some of them were haled to prison, they severely punished others, and then the persecution became bloody by the torments, that these generous confessors suffered for the name of Jesus.

Amongst those that signified themselves, a physician more recently made his faith appear; he was much grieved to see the altars of the true God violated and despoiled, crosses broken in pieces, the holy images exposed to the scorn, laughter, and im-

piety of idolaters to repair this loss, and that believers might not be left destitute of the ordinary marks of their religion, he distributed to each of them images and crucifixes. He went from door to door with the precious pledges of our salvation, animating the weak, and confirming the more courageous in their faith. *Do not fear*, said he to them, *him who can only exercise his weak power on the body, but fear that great God, who, as he has deprived you of life, can also punish your soul with an eternal death, and rather suffer all sorts of torments, than forsake his holy law*

The Mandarin, offended at the boldness of the physician, commanded him to be loaden with chains, and, having caused him to be dragged before his tribunal, they prepared all things for his being cruelly bastinado'd, when his godson, who came running thither with other christians, threw himself on his knees at the judge's feet, and begged of him with tears in his eyes, that he would permit him to receive the chastisement of his godfather.

This zealous physician, who aspired to nothing more than martyrdom, was so far from giving his place to another, that he constantly and stedfastly forbade it, and, at that time, there arose such a scuffle between them, that the angels admired, and that made the christian religion to be respected by the idolaters. The judge stood amazed at it, and turn'd towards those eminent confessors of Jesus Christ, *your ways*, says he to them, *this forwardness to suffer the punishment of your faults deserves forgiveness, I pardon you, but, henceforward, think of pleasing the emperor, and be more careful to obey the emperor's orders*

When the Spirit of God hath once seized on the heart, mens words are not capable to touch them. This zealous physician, whom the sight of execution had made more courageous, continued his acts of charity

city as before, and his zeal made such a noise up and down, that the Mandarin durst no longer mince the matter; he seemed much concerned at the contempt he used of his threatenings, insomuch that he gave orders to his officers to bring him out, to make a severe example of him.

In effect, he caused him to be beat so cruelly in his presence, that those, who were present, were equally surpris'd at the severity of the judge, and the patience of this good christian. This bloody execution once over, some of his relations, who came running at this doleful spectacle, were thinking to carry him to his house, but he positively desired to be carried to church; and what endeavours soever they used to divert him from it, yet he had strength enough left to crawl thither himself, borne up by the arms of several christians. He came thither all bathed in his gore; and, kneeling down at the foot of the altar, O Lord, saith he, *thou seest this day, that I prefer thy holy law to all the sweetness of life: I come not to demand justice of thee for all the blood thy enemies have spilled, I come to offer thee that which remains of my own; I do not deserve to die for such a good cause; but thou, O my God, deservest the intire sacrifice of my life.* And then turning towards father Introcetta, who began to comfort him. *Ab! father,* answered he, *I shall be now at life brought of my joy, if it were not my sins, but my zeal that had brought this light chastisement upon me.*

This example, and many others, that I forbear to relate, made such impressions upon the idolaters hearts, that a great many of them resolved to embrace the christian faith, being persuaded, that sentiments, so opposite to corrupt nature, could not possibly proceed either from passion or error.

Among them, whom the holy Spirit did effectually touch, were three who appeared full of that very

faith, that made in former times almost as many martyrs in the primitive church as believers; they were young, handsome, of quality, and what is more, engaged by their condition blindly to comply with the viceroy's inclinations. Nevertheless, counting their temporal estate as nothing, they demanded publick baptism.

The father, to bring the faith of these neophytes to the test, hid nothing from them that might anywise stagger them; but it was all in vain to represent to them the rigour of the edicts, the viceroy's indignation, the desolation they were like to cast their families into, the danger of losing their estates, honour, life, and all these considerations served only to animate them the more; so that, after a pretty long trial, they were initiated into our sacred mysteries, and took part as others did, in the cross of Christ. Their conversion fortified the feeble-minded, and comforted father Intorcetta for all the evils that the persecution had made his church to suffer.

But the viceroy was so much the more provoked, because he had not the liberty at that time to shew his resentment; for, just then, they delivered him two letters from prince Sofah; one of them was for father Intorcetta, the other, that was directed to himself, was full fraught for reproaches, for that he seemed to make no account of the prince's commendation: *I could never have believed, says he to him, that to please a company of ill affected people, who have exasperated your spirit at the christians, you would have deviated from the counsell I gave you. It is a friendship that I endeavour'd to inspire you with better sentiments: think upon it once more, and reflect seriously with yourself, that it is I that speak to you. I expect three things from your friendship; first, that you deliver the letter yourself to father Intorcetta, according to the superscription. The second, that you do so well satisfy the father,*
that

that he may have occasion to bless himself for the kind offices you render him, and that he himself may testify the same to me. And the third is, that henceforward you do not any longer disturb either the missionaries or christians. In short, I am extremely ~~sorry~~ for being obliged to write to you so often about this subject. If you for the future mend your manners, I shall write to you a third time to thank you; but, if your passion continues, this is the last letter you shall ever receive from me.

Then did the viceroy repent him of his former proceedings; yet, was he so far engaged, that he thought he could not handsomely go back with any honour. He found it especially very hard to sue to a missionary for his friendship, whom he but just now treated, and that publickly, with the utmost disdain; but yet, dreading prince Soſan's resentment, who was the most powerful and in most credit of all the ministers of the empire: On one hand, he resolved to stand to what he had done already against the christians, without driving matters any farther; and on the other hand, to dispatch one of his officers to Peking, to purge and clear himself to the prince.

In this interim, father Intorcetta having a secret view of the letter that the viceroy had received, intimated to the fathers at court the small effect they had produced; insomuch that those fathers resolved to signify the same to the emperor, in case prince Soſan should think it adviseable. Wherefore they related to him what was passed at Hanicheu, the obstinacy of the viceroy, the affliction of father Intorcetta, the danger wherein his church was, the ruin whereof would infallibly involve in it the utter ruin of all the missions in the empire. Since all your endeavours, my lord, added they, seem ineffectual, there appears nothing that can put a stop to the violence of this obstinate Mandarin, but the emperor's authority;

autherity; but we should be wanting to our true interests (and what sways the more with us) to the acknowledgment we are bound to give for your favours, if we were ruled by any other considerations than yours.

The prince, already provoked by the viceroy's behaviour, was not sorry at this overture, and believed he had now found a fair opportunity to revenge himself; so that these fathers having recommended the importance of their affairs to God Almighty, wherein the solid establishment, or utter ruin of religion was concerned, came to the palace on the 21st of December 1691, and demanded audience.

The emperor sent some eunuchs, his confidants, to know what their business was: The fathers presently declared to them, the heinous excess of the viceroy of Hamcheu, as well in respect of the missionaries, as in respect of the christians under his government; they added moreover, that they had suffered a long time without complaining, in expectation that their patience would pacify his spirit; but since the mischief became every day greater, and greater, without all hopes of remedy, they came to prostrate themselves at the emperor's feet, as to the usual asylum of oppressed innocence, most humbly to beseech him, to grant to their brethren in the provinces that happy peace they themselves enjoyed at Peking, in the very sight, and under the protection of his majesty.

The emperor, to whom they reported this discourse, had a mind to try the fathers' constancy, and so returned them no favourable answer; but they, never ceasing to represent the unhappiness the indifference of this prince was shortly like to bring them under, he sent new eunuchs to acquaint them, that he was amazed to see them so infatuated with the christian religion: 'Is it possible, he bid them tell them, that you are always busied about a world whither you

you are not yet come, and count that wherein you are at present, as nothing? Believe me, sirs, there is a time for all things, make better improvement of what Heaven instructs you with, and defer all those cares till you cease to live, cares, that are profitable to none but the dead. For my part, ~~and he~~ in a drolling way, I do not concern myself in the business of the other world, and I do not pretend to determine upon the cause of these invisible spirits.

Then the fathers, oppressed with grief, shedding a torrent of tears, prostrated themselves to the very ground, they conjured the eunuchs to report to the emperor the sad condition whereunto they were reduced. *This would be the first time, said they, that this great prince abandoned innocent persons, and appeared insensible of our lamentation. Is it because we are unprofitable strangers that he deals thus with us? At least, gentlemen, pray tell him, that the great God of heaven and earth, whose cause we maintain, for whom we fight, nay, and to whom he himself is beholden for all his grandeur, well deserves, that he should exert all his power to make him known, and his justice in punishing those who do him an injury in the person of his ministers.*

In fine, after all these trials, this gracious prince, moved with compassion, could no longer dissemble his real sentiments, he therefore sent to the fathers (who were still prostrate before his palace gate) an officer of his bed chamber to acquaint them, 'That he did not approve the viceroy of Hamcheu's proceedings, and that he was willing, for their sakes, to put an end to his unjust persecution, and that, in a word, there were two ways to accomplish it. The first, to send to the viceroy a secret order immediately, to give satisfaction for mischiefs past, that thus way, tho' not so exemplary, was the most easy and sure. The second, to present a petition,

and obtain from the tribunes a favourable decree for all the missionaries, which would decide all differences. That they should consult among themselves, what should be the most convenient in the present conjuncture; and, when they had weighed the reasons on both sides, that they should come back the next day to declare to him their positive resolution.

The fathers signified their most humble acknowledgments to the emperor by customary protestations, and returned full with great hopes of happy success, yet very uncertain what course to steer.

They considered on one hand the danger that there was to put their cause into the hands of the Lipou, who always declared against the christian religion; that in all probability there needed no more to revive all the ancient accusations which time seemed to have forgotten: That the missionaries settled in the provinces, whom they had concealed from the court till that time, would be obliged to quit China, or else forsake all their missions: That at least, the proceedings of those who had built new churches, and converted a great number of idolaters against the express prohibitions of parliaments, was sufficient to warrant the viceroy of Hamcheu: That in fine, things may be brought to pass by the subtle devices of our enemies, and secret undertakings of the Bonzes, that they might be so far from quenching the flame of a particular persecution, as we suppose, that we should kindle a general conflagration in the empire, that would not terminate but in the total desolation of christianity.

These reasons, altho' very substantial and solid in themselves, were nevertheless balanced by the following reflections. What protection soever the emperors might have given till that time to the missionaries, yet they experienced, that it was not sufficient to oblige all the Mandarines of provinces to countenance

nance the christians, and that there was a great number of them, who (prejudiced against us either by that universal contempt which the education of China did usually create in them for foreigners, or by the calumnies of the Bonzes, or else by a false zeal for the publick good) thought it was a piece of good service to destroy us, and spoil in a few days that which had been the work of several years.

These particular persecutions were so much the more feared, as they administered occasion to our secret enemies, to declare themselves openly against us, and to compose a strong and great party, which was commonly upheld by the courts appointed for the ordering rites and ceremonies, who always waited for occasions to stop the course of new foreigners into the state; so that if in these critical conjunctures the emperors, by a particular providence, should not have honoured us with their benevolence, christianity would have long since been destroy'd in China, and, it may be, the memory of it would have been totally obliterated.

We should therefore consider, that the court perhaps would not be always so favourable to us; that we needed no more but one moment alone to lose the emperor's gracious favour, or, what was still more dangerous, to intail his indignation upon us, and those of our religion; that, in this fickle state wherein religion was, the least opposition from the mandarines would suffice to set the people's hearts against it, that the great ones themselves durst never declare, or convert, for fear of being one day responsible to the parliaments for their conversion, which probably in time might be made an heinous crime.

On the contrary, if so be the christian faith were once approved by publick edict, nothing afterward could disturb its establishment, since it would be less odious to the idolatrous people, because the christians.

christians would make a publick profession of it, and, at last, the new missionaries would enter without interruption into the vast field of the gospel, and would there sow, without any contradiction, that sacred word, which would then produce an hundred fold.

The only hope of such a great benefit determined the fathers to try this last means; and so much the rather, because they believed they could not in future time meet with any occasion more favourable to accomplish it. The remembrance of signal services, father Verbiest had rendered to the state, was still very recent; the emperor declared how sensible he was of the resolution that father Grimaldi an Italian had taken to cross the seas again for his sake, and to undertake a most tedious journey. Father Thomas, a Flemming, was wholly taken up in mathematics, wherein he acquired the reputation of a learned knowing man, and most pious missionary. Father Pereira a Portuguese, for his part, took a great deal of pains a long time in certain instruments, and several engines that the prince took great delight in: but that which did our business, in getting his heart, was the peace which father Grignon had but just then concluded, three hundred leagues from Peking, between the Chinese and Muscovites. Prince Sofan, nearly related to the emperor, and plenipotentiary, stood amazed at *his* zeal, and publicly declared, that, but for him, this negotiation would never have terminated to the advantage of the empire. He spoke of it to the emperor to that purpose; and at that very time he inspired him with sentiments of esteem and affection for this father, which have continued ever since beyond whatsoever we were able to expect or hope for. Besides, this same father, together with father Bovet, both French, and of the

number

number of those whom the king sent into China in 1685, applied themselves for many years to teach geometry and philosophy to the emperor, with such success, that he could never be weary in discoursing with them upon these matters.

But because these zealous missionaries were fully persuaded, ~~that~~ when religion is concerned, human assistances are very insignificant, if God Almighty do not secretly direct and order the whole work; they began to implore the assistance of him whom nothing is able to resist; they spread open their wants before him, and discovered their hearts in his presence, and told him with the same confidence that once animated Judith: *Make bare, make bare, O Lord, thy arm on our behalf, as thou didst heretofore, and bring to nought the obstacle our enemies oppose against us: Let those who have boasted that they could destroy the temple, who have already profaned thy altar, and trodden under foot the tabernacle of thy holy name; let them at present be sensible, that before thee all their force is nothing but vanity and weakness: Put into our mouths, Lord, that holy word, and replenish our hearts with those wise counsels that make truth always to triumph; to us and thy house, that hath been so many years in a tottering condition, may at this day be immoveably settled and confirmed; and that all nations may in the end confess, that thou only art the true God, and that, ~~besides thee, we ought to seek for none other~~.*

After this fervent prayer they secretly presented their petition to the emperor, that they were afterwards to offer up in publick. He read it, but not finding therein what was the most capable to make impression upon the spirit of the Chinese (for they insisted upon what principally related to the sanctity and truth of the christian religion) he drew up another himself in the Tartarian language, which he sent back to the fathers, yet leaving them to their liberty

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to retrench, or add thereto, as they shall judge most convenient.

Indeed, if one do but never so little reflect upon the particular character of the Emperors of China, one cannot sufficiently admire, that this present emperor should vouchsafe to descend from the loftiest degree of grandeur, which he observes every where else, nay even in respect of the greatest princes, to make himself familiar with pitiful missionaries: for a man to consider after what manner he takes a particular account of all their affairs; how he speaks to them, how he puts them in a way, would he not conclude that it is a private man that manages the concerns of his friend? Yet nevertheless, it is one of the greatest kings in the world, that is pleased thus to stickle to please a company of strangers, even at the peril of the fundamental laws of the nation.

But after all, it is no wonder that a God, who, to establish his religion, humbled himself so far, as to make himself like to men, does oblige sometimes the greatest princes of the world to divest themselves of their majesty and innate pride, to co-operate and concur in this grand work. For certainly, what care soever we may have taken to make this private favour to us, yet must we needs herein positively acknowledge the efficacy of divine grace. It is the almighty voice of the Lord that alone can, to speak in the scripture expression, *bruise the cedars, and shake the mountains of the wilderness; that he can abase the great ones of the world, and give to their hearts what motion he pleases.*

Whilst all these things were transacted at Pekin, the viceroy of Hamcheu, that had now leisure to make some reflections upon his behaviour, was not peaceable in his province. The credit of prince Sosa did grievously perplex him; and above all, he dreaded his just resentment: for to pacify him, he thought

thought it the wisest course to send one of his officers to him, under pretence to justify himself to him, but in effect, to exasperate the principal Mandarines of Lipou against the missionaries, in case he should find any opportunity to do so.

At that time this officer arrived at court, but prince Sofan would not so much as hear him; and, packing him away, briskly told him, that he much wonder'd that his master made such little account of persons whom the emperor honoured with his affection, and employed and trusted in his service.

As to what relates to their business, I am no more concerned in it than the emperor would himself. These fathers have implored his protection, and he well understands how to do them justice without my intermeddling: besides, when I wrote on their behalf, it was not so much to do them a kindness, as thereby to exhibit a token of friendship to the viceroy, in plucking him from the precipice whither he had so indiscreetly thrown himself.

This answer did so startle this officer, that, without ever dreaming of making any other progress, he returned to his master at Hamcheu to render an account of the ill success of his commission. The fathers, who had notice of it, understood by that, that they were to lose no time, and that they were speechless to improve the good disposition of prince Sofan, so the next Candlemas day they went to the palace, and presented to the emperor, with the usual ceremonies, the petition that he himself had composed, of which see here the translation.

May it please your Majesty,

WE expose to you, with the most perfect submission, and most profound respect that we are capable of, the beginning, end, inducements, and motives of our most humble request, being confident that you will vouchsafe to hear it with

the

the same prudence that attends all your actions,
and with that benevolence wherewith you have
been graciously pleased to honour us

On the ninth month of the moon, father Intor-
cetta, one of your majesty's subjects, whose abode
is in the city of Hamcheu, did acquaint us, that
the viceroy had strictly charged the Mandarines of
his province to pull down all the temples of the
christians, to burn the printing tables, upon which
are engraven all the books of our religion. More
over, he hath publickly declared, that our doctrine
is false and dangerous, and consequently not to be
tolerated in the empire, and hath added several
other things most disadvantageous to us

Upon this news, sir, seized with horror, and
penetrated with grief, we thought ourselves obliged
to have recourse to your majesty, as the common
father of the afflicted, to lay before you the de-
plorable condition whereunto we are reduced,
for, except you grant us your protection, it is alto-
gether impossible to avoid the stratagems of our
enemies, and to ward the blow wherewith they
threaten us

That which administers comfort to us, sir, is
we appear at your majesty's feet, is to see with
what wisdom you influence and move all the parts
of your empire, as if it were one body, of which
you are the soul, and in what unconcealed
and impartiality you regulate the interests of each
private man, without acceptation of persons, in
somuch that you could not be but if you knew
but one single subject oppressed by injustice, or
but even deprived of that rank and recompense
he deserves

You surpass, great sir, the mightiest kings
amongst your predecessors, who have in their times
permitted false religions in China, for you do in-
tirely love truth, and do not approve of falshood,
for

for this reason it is, that, in taking your progress to view your provinces, you have given a thousand testimonies of your royal affection to the European missionaries that were in your road; as if you meant thereby to testify, that you value their doctrine, and that you would be very glad that they would settle in your states; what we deliver here, in publick, is generally known to the whole empire.

Therefore, when we behold the viceroy of Hamcheu to stifle the christian religion, the false and dangerous religion; when we are informed that he uses all his endeavours to destroy it; how are able to stifle our just sorrow, and forbear to declare to your majesty what we suffer?

This is not the first time, sir, that they have persecuted us without any reason; therefore father Adam Schaal, your subject, on whom your predecessors heap'd many extraordinary favours, made it known to all the court, that the rules of the celestial motions, established by the ancient astronomers of China, were all false, he proposed others, that did perfectly agree with the constellations that were approved, and made use of with no small success, so that this change brought order again into the empire. Your majesty is not ignorant of what pass'd at that time in Peking, we may, we hope, leave to remember how matters stood there, since, ~~upon~~ ^{because} so many singular favours we there received; yet upon the account of exploding and abolishing ~~of~~ these errors, how much did the father afterwards suffer by calumnies of his enemies? Yam quam sien, and those of his faction, falsely accused him of several crimes, under pretence of novelty, as if this new astronomy had not agreed with heaven, he died, not being able at that time to justify himself, but your majesty put father Verbiest in his place, and heap'd on him so many favours,

favours, that the life of this father was too short;
 and his words too faint to demonstrate to all the
 world the greatness of his acknowledgments: yet
 did he deeply resent all these benefits, and it was
 on purpose not to be ungrateful, that he was
 busied for above twenty years in composing all
 sorts of books for the publick benefit, both in
 astronomy, arithmetick, musick, and philosophy,
 that are still extant in the palace, together with
 divers others which he had not time to complet
 and finish.

But, since your majesty is perfectly instructed in
 all these particulars, we dare not presume to tire
 out your patience by a longer discourse; we do
 only humbly beseech your majesty to consider,
 that all this is not sufficient to intitle us to the
 people's affection for us, and confidence in us.
 If, as they accuse us, the law that we preach be
 false and dangerous, how can we, sir, justify the
 conduct of princes, who have honour'd us with
 their esteem?

Nevertheless, not to mention any thing of your
 predecessors, your majesty yourself hath made it
 sure of our loyalty, that you order'd father Ver-
 bieft to found some cannon of a new model, to
 put an end to a dangerous war: you sent rather
 Grimaldi cross the vast ocean to go into Muscovy,
 with the letters and seal of the high, and famous
 militia; you sent the fathers Gerbillon and de Siam,
 upon very important affairs, to the very farthest
 parts of Tartary; nevertheless, your majesty well
 knows, that those, who are governed by the prin-
 ciples of a false religion, never use to serve their
 prince faithfully; they almost ever abandon them-
 selves to their own passions, and never aim at any
 thing but their own particular interest.

If therefore we do exactly discharge our duty,
 and, if to this very day we have always sought the
 publick

public good, it is most manifest this zeal proceeds from an heart well affected, full of esteem and veneration, and (if ye may be bold to say so) of a singular affection for the person of your majesty. On the contrary, if this reverence cease to submit to you, it would be, from that very time, contrary to right reason, good sense, and all sentiments of humanity.

This being supposed, sir, we humbly beseech you to consider, that, after the fatigues of a tedious voyage, we are at length arriv'd in your empire, exempt from that spirit of ambition and covetousness, that commonly bring other men thither, but with an ardent desire to preach to your people the only true religion.

And truly, when we appeared here the first time, we were entertain'd with abundance of marks of distinction, as we have often said already, and which we cannot repeat too often. In the tenth year of Chun-tchi they preferr'd us to the sole direction of the mathematicks. In the fourteenth year of the same reign, they gave us leave to build a church at Pekin, and the emperor himself was willing to grant us a particular place for the burial of our dead. In the twenty seventh year of your majesty's glorious reign, your majesty honoured the memory of father Verbiest not only by new titles, but also by the care you took to cause the last offices he perform'd to him, with an almost royal splendour and magnificence. Some while after, you appointed an apartment, and masters to the new French missionaries, to facilitate their learning of the Tartarian tongue. In a word, you seem'd so well satisfied with their deportment that you caused the services they had render'd to the state by their voyages into Tartary, and negotiation with the Muscovites, to be insert'd in the records of the nation. What a happiness, sir, and a glory is it for us to be judg'd capable of serving so great a prince!

‘ Since therefore your majesty, who does so wisely govern this grand monarchy, vouchsafeth to employ us, and put such confidence in us, how is it possible there should be one single Mandarin so irrational to refuse one of our brethren permission to live in his province? Verily, sir, one cannot sufficiently deplore the hard fate of that good old man, who, in a little corner of the earth, humbly requires so much space, as is necessary peaceably to spend the remainder of his days, which yet he cannot obtain.

‘ It is for this reason, sir, that all of us, your majesty’s most humble subjects, who are here like forsaken orphans, that would injure no body; nay, who endeavour to avoid law-suits, quarrels, wranglings, and the least contestations; it is for this reason (we say) that we beseech you to take our cause in hand, with those sentiments of equity that are so essential to you; have some compassion, sir, upon persons who have committed no fault; and, if your majesty, after being fully informed of our carriage, does really find, that we are innocent, we beseech you to let all the empire understand, by a publick edict, the judgment you entertain of our morals and doctrine. It is for the obtaining of this favour, that we assume the liberty of presenting to you this request. In the meantime all and every your subjects the missionaries will expect with fear, and intire submission, what you shall be pleased to appoint, touching the premises. In the 12th year of the reign of Cham-hi, the 16th day of the 12th month of the moon.’

The emperor graciously receiv’d this petition, and sent it the 18th of the same month to the court of rites, with an order to examine it, and, with the first opportunity, to make report of it to him; but, because there is a vacation in all the courts of judicature in China, much about the same time, until the 15th of the first month of the year following, the Lipou could not answer till the 18th of the said month:

months upon the whole, their judgment was much contrary to the emperor's intentions, and interest of the missionaries. For the Mandarines, having reported at large the ancient edicts enacted against the christian religion, concluded, that this business required no farther discussion, and that they were to stick close to the first orders of parliaments, and of the court, which prohibited, upon grievous penalties, the natural born subjects, to entertain the new doctrine of the Europeans, that, notwithstanding they deem'd it convenient to preserve the church in the city of Hamcheu, and to give orders to the Mandarines of that province, not to confound the christian religion with the seditious sects of China.

The emperor was, in a manner, as much concerned as the missionaries at this new decree when they presented it to him, he discovered some trouble at it, and left it for several days in his closet, without declaring himself, to the end that the Mandarines of Lipou, having notice of it, might have time to come back, but, when he saw their obstinacy, he was not willing to make turbulent spirits to rebel, and, resolved at last, tho' sore against his will, to sign it.

This news threw the fathers into a great consternation, and one Chao a gentleman of the bed chamber, whom the emperor sent to comfort them, found them in a condition worthy of compassion. He was troubled at it himself (for he loves us dearly, and hath given us upon several occasions most signal services). This officer endeavour'd, as he had orders, to moderate their affliction, but, whether it was that these fathers were not masters of themselves, or, that they had quite given over all thoughts of keeping any further correspondence with a prince that had deserted them, they utter'd upon this occasion whatsoever the most sensible grief is able to inspire into afflicted persons.

What signify, my lord, say they, all the favours it hath hitherto pleas'd the emperor to do us, since

at this conjuncture himself makes them unprofitable? Was it to tumble us down in a more illustrious manner, that he apply'd himself so long time to exalt us? What delight will he take hereafter to see us, covered with shame and confusion, to serve for a laughing-stock to our enemies, and be a spectacle to the whole empire? Will that prince, who loved us so dearly, will he be able hereafter, without being moved at it, to hear that the rabble insult over us? That his petty officers make us to be beaten in open courts? That viceroys banish us from their provinces, that they exile us shamefully from his empire?

We lay out ourselves for him, our cares, studies, and all our watchings are given to him. One part of our brethren are already dead by their labours, others have impair'd their health by the same, and we who are still alive, enforced by the same desire of pleasing him, willingly and freely sacrifice all the precious moments of our life to him.

We hoped to merit by this zeal, that he would at length approve of the religion, which we preach to his people (for why should we dissemble the matter to you, to you who have so long known the real sentiments of our hearts) that was, you know, the ~~only~~ motive of all our undertakings. how powerful, how magnificent soever this prince may be, we ~~have~~ ^{have} never had the least thoughts of coming so far to serve him, if the inter't of our most holy faith had not engaged us therein. Nevertheless he prescribes it at this day, and signs with his own hand the shameful decree of our condemnation. There you see, my lord, what all our hopes are come to, there is the fruit of all our labours. With how much greater calmness would we have received the sentence of death, than an edict of this nature? For, do not imagine, that we are able to survive the loss of christianity.

This discourse, attended with a great deal of trouble, and a torrent of tears, made a great impression upon

upon the officer's spirit, he went immediately to report it to the emperor, and described to him the father's sorrow in such lively colours, that this good prince gave way to some emotion. *I have always, said he, sought out all occasions, to do them a kindness, but the Chinese have traversed all in good designs, I could at this time forbear following the stream, but, in short, however the case stands, they may make account that I love them, and that I shall not forsake them.*

In effect, he began more than ever to employ them in his service, but yet, he no longer found the same eagerness in the execution of his orders, nor the same serenity and alacrity upon their countenances. They always appeared before him dejected, mournful, and as if their heads had been out of order by the shrewd blow they lately receiv'd. However, he was so far from being disheartened, that he proposed to them, to send for a doctor of physick to court, who was newly arrived at Macao, who, that he might be the more serviceable to the missions, had turned priest of our company.

The fathers made answer, that this doctor had wish'd, and that too with a great deal of passion, to employ his skill, and all the arcana of his art, to preserve such a precious health, as that of his majesty; but, being amazed at the decree that had pass'd against the christians, he was quite off from any design to come into China, and that he was preparing to return into Europe that, nevertheless, since his majesty ordered it should be so, they would write with all expedition to Mocao to have him come. Whilst the missionaries were over head and ears in their melancholy, the viceroy of Hamcheu triumphed at his first success, and cast about how to take new measures, to finish his work. He set all the commissioners of the officers at work, for several days, to draw out copies of the new decree, to have them dispers'd throughout all the provinces, at last, he issued out more severe orders against the christians

than the former. In fine, no longer doubting of the victory, he sent to the emperor an ample request against the missionaries, to accomplish their undoing; but this request came a little too late: and, when it was presented, the face of affairs was already alter'd.

For prince Sofan, not being able to withstand the solicitations of the fathers, and especially of father Gerbillon, whose particular friend he was, resolved to solicit afresh on our behalf; wherefore he went and found the emperor, and represented to him whatsoever the most zealous christian could possibly have spoken on the like occasion.

He set before him, again, the zeal and devotion of the fathers in whatsoever respected his person, the the services they had render'd the state during the wars, their being intent to perfect the sciences, and to rectify the kalendar. *In a word, sir, said he, they are a sort of people, that make no account of their lives, when serving or pleasing you is in question. 'Tis true, all this could not deserve, that your majesty should approve of their faith, if it be otherwise dangerous, but, was there ever a more wholesome doctrine than theirs, or more beneficial to the government of a people?*

The emperor, who joyfully heard this discourse, yet for all that persisted in his former determination, *It is done now, said he to him, I shall have done myself a kindness, to have sav'd these honest missionaries; but the outrageous carriage of the Mandarines against them did not permit me, to follow my own inclination.*

How, sir, replied the prince, are not you the master? And when the business was to do justice to subjects, so eminent as these are, could not you interpose your authority? I will go myself, if your majesty thinks fit, to these gentlemen, and I am not without hopes of bringing them to terms. At last the emperor, not being any longer able to hold it out against so pressing solicitations, causes a letter immediately to be dispatched to the Colaos, their assessors, and to all the

‘ selves to glory, riches, and making their *own* for-
 ‘ tunes, than to the settling the state upon a sound
 ‘ bottom, very few of them do purely aim at the
 ‘ publick good. These strangers, on the other hand,
 ‘ exempt from all passion, love the empire more than
 ‘ we do ourselves, and do frankly sacrifice their own
 ‘ repose to the tranquillity of our provinces.

‘ We have experienc’d the same during the whole
 ‘ course of our civil wars, and in the late bicker-
 ‘ ings we had with the Muscovite, for, to whom
 ‘ do you suppose us obliged for the happy success of
 ‘ this negotiation? It would without all question be
 ‘ consistent with my interest, to ascribe all the glory
 ‘ of it to myself, who have been the plenipoten-
 ‘ tiary for the peace, but, if I were so unjust as to
 ‘ do myself that honour, to the prejudice of these
 ‘ fathers, the chieftains of the enemies troops, all
 ‘ my own officers, and my own army would say, I
 ‘ told an untruth.

‘ It is, gentlemen, these fathers, who by their
 ‘ prudence, and insight into affairs, and the just tem-
 ‘ per and moderation that they brought, put an end
 ‘ to that important affair. Without their counsel,
 ‘ we should have been forced to exact, at the expense
 ‘ of our blood, the rights which the injustice of our
 ‘ enemies did so obstinately refuse to the emperor, or,
 ‘ perhaps you would have had the trouble to see us
 ‘ wholly divested of them, or, at least I should
 ‘ have been no longer in a condition to defend them.

‘ What have we done, gentlemen, in return for
 ‘ such eminent service? Nay, what can we do for a
 ‘ company of men, who demand neither riches, nor
 ‘ places of trust, nor honours? Who esteem and
 ‘ respect us, without so much as caring whether we
 ‘ do so by them? Certainly we ought to be concerned,
 ‘ if it were not in our power some way or other to
 ‘ oblige strangers, who do so generously sacrifice
 ‘ themselves for us, and I am inclin’d to believe,
 ‘ gentlemen, that, when you have made reflections
 ‘ thereon

thereon, you will give me thanks for having discovered to you the only way whereby they can become sensible of our acknowledgment

They have a law, which is to them instead of all the riches in the world They adore a Duty, who alone makes up all their comfort and happiness Suffer them only freely to enjoy the benefit they possess, and permit them to communicate it to our people, altho' in that very thing they rather do us a kindness, than we do them, yet they will be grateful to us, and accept it from our hands, as the recompence of all their services

The Lamas of Tartary, and the Bonzes of China, are not troubled in the exercise of their religion Nay, the very Mahometans have rear'd a mosque at Hamcheu, that domineers over all our publick edifices They oppose no banks to these torrents, that threaten inundation to all China men connive, they approve of in some measure all these unprofitable and dangerous sects, and, now when the Europeans sue to us for liberty to preach up a doctrine, that contains no other than maxims of the most refined virtue, we do not only repulse them with disdain, but think we do good service to condemn them just as if the laws, that oblige us to shut up the entrance into our empire against superstition, and ~~young~~ vanities, had likewise proscribed naked truth

The prince, expatiating much upon this point, was interrupted by the heads of the assembly, who remonstrated to him, that, for what he could, there was still some danger lest this new sect might occasion some disorder in process of time And, that it was the part of good policy to stifle these little monsters of rebellion and discord, in their very birth That, in short, they were foreigners, whose spirit and secret designs were capable of administering some suspicion

What suspicion, reply'd the prince? I have been Colao this ten years, and I never heard any complaint against the christians, Believe me, gentlemen,

‘ men, it were to be wish’d, that the whole empire
 ‘ would embrace their religion. For, is it not that
 ‘ religion that commands children to honour and
 ‘ obey their parents? Subjects to be faithful to their
 ‘ superiors, servants exactly to perform the will of
 ‘ their masters: That forbids to kill, to steal, and
 ‘ to cozen; not to covet any thing that is your
 ‘ neighbours. That abhors perjury and calumny.
 ‘ That dislikes lying and falshood. That inspires
 ‘ modesty, simplicity, uprightness and temperance.
 ‘ Examine, gentlemen, and sound, if possible, the
 ‘ heart of man; if there you find one single vice
 ‘ which the christian law does not forbid, or one vir-
 ‘ tue that it does not enjoin, and counsel; I leave you
 ‘ to your liberty to declare against it. But now, if
 ‘ all things in it be holy and consonant to reason,
 ‘ why do you still boggle to approve of it?

- After that, the prince, seeing their minds to be wa-
 vering, propos’d the ten commandments of our reli-
 gion, and explain’d them with so much eloquence,
 that the Mandarines looking one upon another, find-
 ing nothing to offer against it, did ingenuously confess
 that one might conform to this new doctrine without
 any danger. The emperor, inform’d of what was
 debated, was pleas’d (for to render the action more
 famous) to have also all the ministers of state to be
 convok’d together, with the Mandarines of Lipou,
 who were Chinese, to whom they made known be-
 fore-hand the resolution of the Tartarian Mandarines.

In this general assembly, they repeated all that was
 spok’n in the private assembly; and, after prince
 Sofan had left no stone unturned to recover the Chi-
 nese from their old prejudice, they came at length to
 this result, that a law should be enacted favourable
 to the christians, which was drawn up in form of a
 petition, to be presented to the emperor, to obtain his
 confirmation of it; it was to this effect.

*Heoupatai, subject to your majesty, president of the
 sovereign tribunal of rites, and chief of several other
 orders,*

orders, presents to you this most humble petition, with all the submission and respect, which he and all his assessors ought to have for all your commands, especially when you do us the honour to require our advice about the important affairs of state

We have seriously examin'd what any way relates to the Europeans, who attracted from the extremities of the world by the fame of your singular prudence, and other your eminent qualities, have past that vast extent of seas, which separates us from Europe Since they have lived amongst us, they have merited our esteem and acknowledgements, by the signal services they have rendered us in the civil and foreign wars, by their continual application to composing of books very curious and profitable, for their uprightness and sincere affection for the commonwealth

Besides which, these same Europeans are very peaceable, they do not excite any commotions, or foment differences in these our provinces, they do wrong to no man, they commit no notorious facts, moreover, their doctrine hath no affinity with the false and dangerous sect that infest the empire, neither do their maxims incline turbulent spirits to sedition

Since therefore we do neither hinder the Lamas of Tartary, nor Bonzes of China from having temples, nor from offering incense therein to their pagods, much less can we, with any reason, restrain the Europeans, (who neither do nor teach any thing contrary to the wholesome laws) from having likewise their respective churches, there to preach their religion in publick Certainly these two things would be point blank contrary to one another, and we should manifestly seem to contradict ourselves

We therefore judge it meet and expedient, that all the temples dedicated to the Lord of Heaven, in what place soever they may be, ought to be preserved, and that we may safely permit all those who would honour this God, to enter into his temples, to offer incense to him, and to pay that worship to him, that hath hitherto been

476 *Of the publick Establishment*
been praesised by the christians, according to their an-
cient custom, so that none may, for the time to come,
presume to oppose the same

In the meant me we shall expect your majesty's orders
thereupon, to the end we may communicate them to the
governors and viceroys, as well at Peking, as at other
cities of the provinces Done in the thirty first year of
the reign of Cham hi, the third day of the second
month of the moon Signed, the president of the sove-
reign tribunal of rites, with his assessors, and under-
neath the four ministers of state, called Colaoi, with
their general officers and Mandarines of the first order

The emperor received this decree with unexpressible joy, he ratify'd it forthwith, and dispatch'd a copy of it to the fathers, sealed with the seal of the empire, to be, says he, perpetually preserved in the archives of their house Some time after, he caused it to be published throughout the whole empire, and the supreme tribunal of rites, sending it to the principal officers, added these ensuing words *Wherefore, you viceroys of provinces, be sure you receive this imperial edict with a most profound respect, and, as soon as it comes to your hands, read it attentively, value it, and see you fail not to execute it punctually, conformable to the example that we have given you ourselves* Moreover, cause copies of it to be taken, to be dispersed into all the places of our government, and acquaint us of what you shall do in this point

So soon as father Intorcetta had notice of what had past at Peking, he departed for court, and went to throw himself at the emperor's feet, to render him most humble thanks in his own, and in the name of all the missionaries of China This good prince, when he had bestowed on him many demonstrations of affection, caused him to be conducted back again into his province, by father Thomas, Mandarin of the mathematicks He made his entrance into the city of Hamcheu in triumph, surrounded by christians,

ians, and, received by their acclamations, who look'd upon him as an angel of peace

Nevertheless, as God mixes always some bitterness with our comforts, the joy, this good father had conceived, was soon overcast, and allay'd by the utter ruin of his church, involved some time before in a publick conflagration, wherewith the best part of the city was consumed

This accident gave occasion to father Thomas, to desire the viceroy to build a new church for the father, and he himself gave him to understand, that the emperor expected it from him. This Mandarin was intolerably vexed at the ill success of his enterprise, which the late arrival of the father increased, but he was quite besides himself, to think he must be forced to lodge a stranger honourably in his capital city, whom he would, with all his heart, have banish'd some days before from his province, yet he dissembled the matter like a wise man, and, to comply with the time, he afforded the missionary one of the finest houses in the city, till such time as, at his own charges, he should have rebuilt the ancient college

It was not at Hamcheu alone, that the christian religion seem'd to triumph, all the churches of the empire, which the new edict, in some respect, drew out of captivity, by granting to the people liberty of conscience, gave great demonstrations of joy, but the city of Micaeo, that served for a cradle to the infant christianity, made its joy to appear by a solemn holiday, which was accompanied with all the tokens of publick mirth and cheerfulness, which the people's devotion render'd much more solemn

Those, who shall consider the constitution of the government of China, the almost unsurmountable difficulties that strangers have met with in screwing themselves into it, the aversion of mens minds from novelty in matters of religion, and, on the other hand, the small company of missionaries Europe hath supply'd

supply'd us with, the civil wars, and revolution that have so often discomposed the state in this latter age, will seriously confess, that this occurrence, of the most memorable, that probably hath hap-
pened since the infancy of the church, cannot be the product of human wisdom. * *Deus autem rex nostrae ante secula operatus est salutem in medio terræ; tu confirmasti in virtute tua mare — tu confregisti caput draconis; tuus est dies & tua est nox.* It is our God, 'tis our everlasting king, who hath wrought salvation in this vast kingdom, which they call the middle of the earth. He it is, who hath for ever brought a calm upon this sea, so much agitated, and infamous hitherto for so many shipwracks. Thou hast, O Lord, bruised the head of that proud † dragon, whose name was so dreadful. It is now then that the day and the night, that is to say, the East and the West belong to thee; forasmuch as both worlds have at last submitted to thy empire.

At such time as I had the honour to present to the most holy father, that idolatry in the East, attacked on all sides by the ministers of the gospel, was just upon the point of falling; and that, if once China could be drawn in to declare itself in favour of us, all the people adjacent, led by their example, would quickly break their idols in pieces, and would not be long before they submitted to the yoke of the christian faith; this thought alone transported this holy pontiff with joy, and revived that sincere piety, and fervent zeal in his heart, that he shews upon all occasions for the salvation of souls; but he told me that such a great change as that was no ordinary miracle.

What sentiments will he have, my lord, when he understands that what (as things then stood) he scarce durst hope for are now at last accomplish'd for the glory of his pontificate, and universal benefit of Christendom. We know, moreover, that, since this

* Psal 73
is adored in China

† The dragon is the emperor's arm, and

famous edict, the Chinese run in crowds to be baptised 'That the Mandarines, still idolaters, build churches to the only true God That a prince of the blood hath abjured his errors, and embraced the faith and cross of Jesus Christ That the emperor himself causeth a church to be erected in his palace, and lodges the ministers of the gospel near his own person

These happy preparations will, without all question, oblige the holy father to employ all his cares to the intire compleating of so great a work, to that effect we demand of him pastors formed by his own hand, and replenished with his spirit missionaries altogether unbiassed, learned, self denying, that join prudence with evangelical simplicity, who may seek the glory of Christ, and that of the nation, rather than their own

Last of all, we heartily wish that all christian kingdoms, out of emulation one of another, may strive (under the pope's authority) who shall first send most ministers into these vast countries, to share with us in our labours, and extend our conquests Nay, tho' the most populous universities and most famous seminaries should be transplanted thither, it would yet be but few Yea, and with all these assistances, we should notwithstanding, to speak in scripture language, groan under the burthen and heat of the day What would become of us, if we leave this new born world to a small number of labourers, whom the piety of some do there maintain?

It is to beg this favour, that I assume the boldness, my lord, to intrust you, at this time, with the concerns of the missions I am well assured that you never undertook any business of consequence for the good of Christendom, but you accomplish'd it Now, altho' this that I propose to you were ten times more difficult than it is indeed, I am, in a manner, sure of success, as soon as ever you shall please to take it upon you

Yet notwithstanding, my lord, to succeed happily in this business, it is not necessary to exert, and put in practice all those qualities of mind, that make you almost ever superior to great enterprizes. That consummate wisdom, that conducts you thro' the most sure roads. That continual intention of mind, which the hardest labour cannot interrupt. That dexterous insinuating conduct, so impenetrable to the quickest eye. In a word, that art, so peculiar to you of persuading, and obtaining what you please. All this is not requisite to the business in hand, you need do no more here but abandon yourself to your own zeal, and use that lively and natural eloquence, that animates your discourses, every time you are pleased, in the sacred college, to stand up for the interest of religion, or when you represent to Christ's vicar the urgent necessities of the church.

Your care; your piety, my lord, will be seconded with as many apostles, as you shall procure missionaries for us: then will the idolaters, newly converted, and believers establish'd and settled in faith, be equally sensible of the great benefits that you shall procure them, and the people, enlightened by these divine lights, which the holy see shall disperse as far as the extremity of the earth, will, all their lives long, bless the paternal charity of the vicar of Christ, and ardent zeal of his ministers. I am, in the most profound respect,

My Lord,

Your Eminence's most humble,

and most obedient Servant.

L. J.

LETTER XIV.

To Monsieur the Abbot Bignon.

A General Idea of the Observations we have made in the Indies, and in China.

Sir,

ALTHO' you should not be at the head of the most ingenious and learned men in Europe, by the rank you hold in the Academy Royal; yet the passion I have always had to give you some marks of my esteem, and to improve by your knowledge, would engage me to communicate to you what we have performed in the Indies, as to the perfection of sciences.

It is, sir, for the credit of this illustrious academy (with which we have such a strict friendship and correspondence) that a person of your merit should seem to have any esteem for the persons it employs in its function; and I suppose, the protection, you are pleased to afford us in the world, will be taken kindly by them; but it is yet more our particular interest, that you would severely and strictly examine our works, and that, when you have implored the esteem of the publick on our behalf, you would, by an impartial and learned criticizing, take some pains to perfect us, and make us one day worthy of its approbation, and your own.

It is not, sir, that I have a mind, in this place, to explain to you in particular all that we have performed, to acquire a more exact knowledge for the future, of the motion of the stars, or to deliver memoirs to those who design to penetrate farther into the secret mysteries of nature. This work, which is of too large an extent, to be comprised within the compass of a single letter, will serve for the subject

of an intire volume, which we hope shortly to have the honour to present to you.

My design at present is only to give you a general idea of it, to the end, that, understanding before-hand the road we have hitherto kept, you may the better judge what is needful to be added, to make us exact, or to be altered, as to our method.

When we departed from Paris, with the instructions of the king, of his ministers of state, and of the academy royal, we proposed to ourselves nothing less than the perfection of natural sciences; but, this project containing in it a great diversity of matters, we supposed it convenient for every one to take his part, not only because each of us had not leisure enough to ply so many different studies all at once, but also, because the spirit of a man hath its limits, and it is very rare to find, in one and the same person, a genius equally proper for all things.

So that we agreed, that some of us should addict ourselves to astronomical observations, geometry, and to the examination of mechanical arts, whilst others should chiefly be taken up in the study of what relates to anatomy, knowledge of simples, history of animals, and other parts of natural philosophy, which every one should chuse, according as his fancy led him; yet so, that even those, who should keep themselves within the compass of any subject matter, should, nevertheless, not neglect the rest, when time, place, or persons should afford them occasions to make any new discovery therein; we agreed likewise, that we should mutually communicate our notions one to another, to the end, that each one might benefit by the common reflections, and withal, that nothing, if possible, should escape our attention.

But let us take what care we could to succeed in this undertaking, we easily perceived, that six persons busied besides in the study of languages, and in preaching

preaching the gospel, could never be able to go through with such a vast design, it therefore came into our mind, first of all, to engage the Europeans that were at that time in the Indies, but above all, the missionaries, to the end, that every one of us might concur in carrying on a design, equally beneficial and glorious to all nations. Secondly, to establish, in divers places, some particular houses, where our mathematicians and philosophers should labour after the example, and under the conduct of the academicians of Paris, who from thence, as from the center of sciences, might communicate their thoughts, their method, and their discoveries, and receive (if I may be so bold as to say so) as by reflection, our weak lights.

But these two expedients, so proper in themselves for the promoting of our project, and withal capable to render France famous to posterity, have hitherto proved ineffectual, on the one hand, we have found very little disposition in other nations to second us, on the other hand, the revolutions of Sam have overthrown our first observatory, which the king's liberty, and the zeal of the ministers of state, had in manner quite finished.

These accidents, tho' fatal ones, did not yet dishearten us, we had thoughts of laying the foundation of a second observatory in China, still more magnificent than that of Sam. It would have been no such difficult matter to have built several others afterwards at Испахан in Persia, at Agra in the Mogul's country, in the isle of Corneo under the line, Tartary, and in several other places, whose situation might facilitate the execution of our design, when that universal war, that has set all Europe on fire so many years, made us sensible of it in the Indies, and in one moment broke all our measures.

Perhaps, sir, peace may put us into the same road, that the tempest hath forced us to forsake.

and that, all in good time, we shall enjoy a calm equally advantageous to religion, to the people's happiness, and to the perfection of sciences. In the mean time, as contrary winds do not hinder skilful pilots to go forward a little, notwithstanding they do much retard their sailing, so have we endeavoured, maugre all these tempests, to pursue our former design, and continue a work, the essay of which, as you may shortly see, will not perhaps be altogether unprofitable.

The difficulty that men have found from all antiquity, to regulate the motions of the stars, was never to be overcome, either by the lucubrations of ancient astronomers, or even by all the penetration of the neoterics, what endeavours soever our imagination may have used to dive into these mysteries of the omnipotent Creator, yet have we made but a sorry progress, and we must needs confess, that heaven is at a much greater distance from our thoughts and conceptions, than it is elevated above our heads. Nothing can bring us nearer to it, than a continued series of observations, and an exact inquiry into every thing that occurs in the stars, because that this continual attention to their motions (making us perceive the gross, and as it were palpable, errors of ancient systems) gives occasion to astronomers to reform them by little and little, and make them more conformable to observation, to this purpose, in these latter days, men have so carefully applied themselves to the perfecting of instruments, pendulums, telescopes, and of whatsoever may any way bring the heavens nearer to our eyes.

In France, England, and Denmark, and in divers other places in the world, they have elevated huge machines, built magnificent towers, as it were, to serve instead of stairs to those who would proceed in this new road, and the progress, that many observers have already made, is so considerable, that one

upon the same line drawn from east to west, it might so happen, that the first would see the whole body of the sun, as it is commonly seen, whilst the second would discover but one part of it. There it would appear half covered, here it would be no more than an ark of light, and still, farther off, it might perchance totally disappear.

It is likewise for the same reason, that an ~~observer~~ ^{observer} placed at the center of the earth, would not behold the sun eclipsed, as we do here, now this difference, which they term the Parallax, would increase, or decrease, according as this luminary should be more or less elevated above the horizon, this is what the Chinese were hitherto ignorant of, and of which, to this day, they have but a very superficial knowledge. As for the Indians, much less capable of being polish'd and refin'd than the Chinese, they are always admiring such wonderful effects, inso-much that the king of Siam demanded one day, if the sun in Europe was the same with theirs in the Indies, since it appeared at the same time so different in these two places.

Wherefore we departed on purpose from Peking, to get to Hamcheu, a considerable city in the province of Chanfi, where, according to our calculation, the sun was to be totally eclipsed. Yet, it was not so, because the longitude of the country was not yet perfectly known to us. The heavens were that day extremely serene, the place very convenient, our instrument fitly placed, and, being three observers, nothing was wanting that might render the observation exact.

Amongst the different methods that may be made use of for these sorts of operations, we made choice of two, that seem'd to us the most plain and easy; the one was to look upon the sun, with a telescope of three feet long, in which they had placed, at the Focus objectivus, a Reticula or little net, composed of twelve

twelve little threads of raw silk, very small, and equally distant one from another, yet so, that they might precisely take up all the space of the sun, whose diameter appeared after this manner to the eye, divided into twelve equal parts.

The second consisting in receiving the representation of the sun (by a telescope of twelve feet) that ~~was~~ painted upon a piece of pasteboard, opposite to the optick glass, at a proportionable distance; we had drawn upon the said pasteboard twelve little concentric circles, the biggest whereof was equal to the apparent discus of the sun; so that it was easy for us to determine, not only the beginning, duration, and end of the eclipse, which require no more but a single optick glass, and a well regulated pendulum; but also its bigness, or (as they commonly call it) its quantity, and the time that the shadow, or rather the moon, spends in covering, or uncovering each part of the sun: for notwithstanding all these parts are equal amongst themselves, yet it doth not therefore follow, that there is requisite an equal number of minutes to go over them, because the continual change of the Parallax retards or puts forward the apparent motion of the moon.

There wanted but the twenty-fourth part to the total covering of the sun, and we determined it to be an eclipse of eight digits and an half (for so astronomers term it) for, to make their calculation just, they are wont to divide the apparent diameter of the planets into twelve digits, and every digit into sixty minutes. In the mean time we observed first of all, that, when three quarters of the sun were eclipsed, the day appeared in a manner not at all changed by it; nay, and we could hardly have perceiv'd it, if we had not had otherwise notice of it; so that an ordinary cloud was almost capable of producing the very same effect.

Secondly, tho' we did not, at the height of the eclipse, see more than a little ark of light, yet might a man read very easily, in the court, the smallest character; I have seen some storms that obscured the heavens as much as they were at that time.

Thirdly, we could by no means discover any star, tho' we endeavour'd it all we could; we only perceived Venus, which doth not denote any great obscurity, since this planet appears oftentimes, even at such time as the sun is wholly risen above the horizon.

The Chinese, notwithstanding, were terribly alarm'd, imagining that the earth was going suddenly to be enveloped in thick darkness. They made an hideous noise all abroad, to oblige the dragon to be gone. It is to this animal that they attribute all the disappearances of the stars, which come to pass, say they, because the celestial dragon, being hunger-bit, holds at that time the sun or moon fast between his teeth, with a design to devour them.

At length the light returned by degrees, and eased the Chinese of their trouble; but we continued our operation, comparing by different calculations the greatness, continuance, and ending of this eclipse, with the different tables of ancient and modern astronomers. There were also made at Peking, Hanchou, and in several other cities of China, the very same observations, which might have served to determine the longitude of all these different places, if we had not had more sure and easier methods to know it by.

Upon the whole, this observation afforded an occasion to make some reflections upon several other eclipses, whereof authors speak diversly. Herodotus lib. 1. relates, that, upon the very day that the king of the Medes and the king of the Lydians fought a bloody battle, the sun appeared totally eclipsed. The combate, saith he, lasted a long time with equal advantage on both sides, till, all on a sudden, thick darkness

darkness covered the earth, and for a while suspended the fury of the soldiers. Father Petau hath placed this eclipse in the year 597, before the birth of our Saviour, on the 9th of July, altho' according to his calculation, it ought to be but of 9 digits 22 minutes, imagining, without doubt, that this portion of the sun eclipsed was considerable enough to ~~such~~ such thick darkness which the historians mention nevertheless, that is so far from sufficing, that our last observation ought to convince us, that such an indifferent eclipse, as that was, could not so much as be seen by the combatants, so that it is much more probable, that this famous battle was fought in the year 585 on the 28th day of May, a day whereon there chanced to be a total eclipse of the sun.

Father Petau cannot disagree with us about this last eclipse, but, if we reckon it according to his tables, we shall find that it is but of 11 digits 20 minutes, that is to say, not quite so big as ours, and, for that reason, we may suppose his tables to be defective, because the 24th part of the sun sufficeth (as we have observed) to make the day pretty clear, notwithstanding, the history would make us believe that it was obscure, yea, and even resembling the darkest night.

In the year 310, before the birth of our Saviour, Agathocles king of Sicily, sailing into Africa with his fleet, bound for Carthage, the sun totally disappeared, and the stars were seen every where, as if it had been mid night; whereupon, divers astronomers, and particularly Ricciolus, are of opinion, that the tables that allow to this eclipse a greatness, that comes pretty near that of the total, do sufficiently make out the history, nevertheless, it is manifest by what we have observed, that the stars would never have been perceived, especially in that brightness, and after that manner that Diodorus and Justin say ~~that~~ so be there had been any sensible part of the

the sun discovered, except this same part, not being eclipsed, had not been near the horizon, as it happened in the year 237, in the beginning of the reign of Gordianus junior, for at that time, the heavens were so darkened, that it was impossible to know one another without wax tapers, at least if we give credit to Julius Capitolinus

The second eclipse we observed, still more considerable than the former, was seen by father Tachard, in his voyage into the Indies, he was at sea on board an Holland vessel, and, if the place would have given him leave to make use of instruments, we should never have seen any thing more ingenious on this subject

The eclipse appeared central, that is to say, the center of the moon, was quite opposite to the center of the sun, but, because the apparent discus of the sun, was at that time bigger than that of the moon, there was seen in the heavens a bright ring, or a great circle of light, and what is most to be wondered at on this occasion is, that father Tachard assures us, that this circle was at least a finger's breadth, which would not agree, neither with the tables of ancient astronomers, nor of the moderns but it is no such easy matter, to make a just estimate of the bigness of luminous bodies, when one judges only upon view, because the light that sparkles, and reflects, causeth them evermore to appear much bigger than they really are

However, these sorts of eclipses, which are called Annular Eclipses, are very rare, yea, and some mathematicians are of opinion, that there cannot be any at all, because they suppose as a thing granted by all hands, that the diameter of the moon, even in its apogæum, that is, at its greatest distance from the earth, was always either equal to that of the sun, or even sensibly greater

So likewise Kepler, writing to Clavius upon the account of an annular eclipse that they had observed at Rome on the 9th of April, in the year 1567, pretends, that this luminary border was nothing else but a little crown of condensed air, enflamed or enlightened by the sun beams, broken or refracted in the atmosphere of the moon. This last observation ~~may~~ be capable of undeceiving those who may have persisted obstinately to follow the like opinion, as well as to disabuse Gassendus's disciples, who imagine that the sun cannot overflow the moon above four minutes at most, that is to say, by its 180th part.

Besides these two eclipses, we have also seen some others of lesser consequence, which I shall forbear to mention, because they contain nothing extraordinary. Those of the moon have most employ'd our time, not only because they are in a greater number, but because there is greater difficulty to observe them well.

The brighter the sun is, the more sensible is its defect, and the body of the moon, very obscure and opaque of itself, depriving us of the sight of it, doth not permit us to doubt so much as one moment of the beginning or ending of its eclipse, but it is not so with the moon, that does not lose its light but by degrees, and by an almost insensible diminution. As the experience we have of it makes us better perceive all these difficulties, than the most profound speculations, will you please, sir, to let me acquaint you, in few words, what perplexes us most, as to this point.

The earth, in its different aspects it bears to the sun, hath always one half of its globe enlightened; whilst its other hemisphere must needs be in darkness, like a bowl that is enlightened by a wax-candle by night, so that on one side there is a projection, as it were, of shadow, in fashion of a cone,
the

the point whereof is very far extended, and loseth itself at length in the vast extent of air.

When therefore the moon, by its particular motion, passes thro' this tenebrous space, she loseth her light, and becomes obscure herself; but now, if we could mark the very moment wherein she enters into it and comes out again, we should know exactly the beginning and ending of the eclipse, but several accidents, that happen at that time, do not suffer us to observe it with so great niceness.

First of all, a long time before the moon touches the shadow I but just now mentioned, its oriental border is enlightened only by a small portion of the sun, which the earth deprives her of by little and little, and by piece-meal; so that, at that time, there is to be seen a kind of smoke that spreads abroad insensibly upon the body of the moon, which often precedes the real shadow a quarter of an hour; and, being this smoke always increases according as the eclipse approaches, it is so confounded and mixed with the beginning of the shadow, that it is almost impossible to distinguish it from it; so that neither experience nor application, nor yet the best telescopes, can hinder an able observator from mistaking sometimes one minute, nay, and sometimes two.

Secondly, when I say, that the eclipse is caused by the interposition of the terrestrial globe, it is not that the moon is then plunged into its shadow, which never reaches farther than 50,000 leagues, supposing the earth's diameter to be 1146 sea leagues, whereas the moon, even in her perigæum, is above 67,000 leagues from the earth; but the globe of the earth being encompassed with a thick and gross air, which we call its Atmosphere, which the rays cannot quite penetrate, there is caused by the interposition of those vapours a new shadow, whose diameter and length do far surpass the true shadow of the earth. Now these vapours are so much the more transparent, as they

they are the more remote from us, whence it comes to pass, that they also make a more faint shadow at the beginning and end of the eclipse, and consequently, they do not afford that liberty to observers, to determine them with any exactness

You may understand by that, sir, why we often discover the moon, yea, at the very height of the eclipse, so far as to distinguish her smallest spots, why she paints herself at that time in so various colours, for she appears red, ash coloured, iron grey, bluish, or somewhat inclining to yellow, insomuch that she seems to be herself sensible of her failings, and shews certain signs of her different passions. You see on the contrary, why in some certain eclipses she totally disappears, and steals quite out of our sight. All this does, no question, happen from the nature of this atmosphere, which changes perpetually, and thereby produces these different effects

In the third place, when the moon begins to grow dark near the horizon, it is yet more difficult to observe well the beginning of it, and a man must take special notice, that the time of this apparent beginning, compared with the time of its ending, doth not give him the middle of the eclipse exactly, because the vapours are much more gross at the horizon, than they are at 30 or 40 degrees of elevation

Fourthly, altho' the direct rays of the sun do not pass thro' the atmosphere of the earth, yet are there a great many of them, that turning aside, or, as they speak, by being broken by refraction, may enlighten the border of the moon, and consequently hinder the shadow from being exactly terminated

Fifthly, it sometimes cometh to pass, that the shadow begins to touch the oriental edge of the moon, at the place where the spots are more obscure than those of the occidental border, which makes, that a man cannot judge equally of the end and the beginning. You see, sir, all this refining of astronomy to the

the modern observators : the ancients went more roundly to work in this matter, and Tycho Brahe himself did not yet hit of it with all his subtilty.

But the moderns have been more ingenious to find out these difficulties, than to find out an expedient to surmount them ; and we have more than once experienced in our observations, that it is not without extreme trouble, that one arrives at that exactness, which is required by the learned of our age ; yet, have we this advantage, that we are a great many observators together, and that we are able, by communicating our notions and doubts one to another, to come nearer the truth. Besides, the heavens have supplied us with a great many eclipses of the moon ; and, there have but few years passed, but we might have observed one or two.

But, amongst this great number, that, which happened on the eleventh of December 1685, was the most favourable to us ; we were at that time at Siam : The king, to whom we had predicted it, and who desired to try the goodness of our tables, was so surpris'd by conferring what he did behold with our prediction, that, from that time, he had some thoughts of detaining us near his person ; or, at least to send somebody to find out some French astronomer in Europe for him. He offer'd of his own accord to build a magnificent observatory for us at Louveau, to render astronomy, if possible, as famous in India, as it was become in Europe, since the establishment of the royal observatory in Paris. And certainly, if ever the stars were the presage of future events, all the heavens seem'd then to promise us a happy success in this new undertaking ; but it is not the sensible course of the planets, that rules our destinies here below ; they proceed from an higher over-ruling power, and all their consequences are written in that mysterious book of divine providence, which before all ages

ages hath determin'd the different events of this world

This project of the king of Siam, so favourable to France, to natural sciences, and to religion, was quickly put in execution, but the death of that good prince overthrew it almost in an instant, and changed the face of all things. The troubles, that then arose, forced our mathematician missionaries to absent themselves, and thereby caused, if I may so say, a kind of an eclipse, which hath so long deprived those people of the European sciences, and light of the gospel yet, these clouds begin to be dispell'd. They are very earnest to have us come back again, but we have learned by woful experience, not to rely too much upon the good will of man, but to place all our confidence in him, who alone can, when it seems good to him, bring light out of darkness.

This last essay, for all that, hath been of some use to astronomy, and we can assure you, that the lunar eclipses observed at Siam, Loureau, Pontichery, Pekin, Nankin, Kiam-chau, and at Canton, with several other places of the East, will not only contribute to the regulating the celestial motions, but likewise to the perfecting geography.

Altho' the science of comets be not of so grand a consequence, yet it is not less admirable, nay, methinks the curiosity of the learned should be so much the more spurred on to attempt something in this way, as it is more difficult to satisfy it as to this point, for it is more than probable, that the wit of man will not be able in a long time to dive into the bottom of these marvellous phenomena.

Comets are so rare, of so short continuance, and so different amongst themselves, that, if they be new bodies that are formed and destroyed in the heavens, it is very hard, and in a manner impossible to lay down general rules of their motions, or to prognosticate

nosticate their appearance and continuance, if they be real planets.

We have had the opportunity to observe two of them, the first was seen in a province in the kingdom of Siam, on the confines of Camboje, towards the sea-coast. It was in the month of August 1686. It cut the equator, passing from north to south, in the 111th degree of right ascension; and its own particular motion, that brought it still near the sun, quite absorb'd it, at least, into the sun-beams.

The second appeared at Pontichery, Molucca, and Pekin, in the month of December 1689. Its motion was contrary to that of the former, it removed from the sun, and came nearer to the southern pole, running over the constellations, Lupus and Centaurus, where it disappeared in the beginning of January to the ensuing year.

If we have but a smattering, in the science of comets, yet in recompence we are sufficiently instructed in what relates to planets; and what our astronomers have discovered at Paris, since the establishment of the observatory, is already matter of comfort to us, for the negligence or ignorance of the ancients.

Amongst the different ways of going to work how to determine their place in the heavens, the most plain, and withal the most exact, is, to take notice of their conjunction with the fix'd stars. It is near a thousand years ago, that Saturn, the highest of all the planets, appear'd close by the equator, and near a star of the third magnitude, situated in the southern shoulder of Virgo. Tycho, in his time, observed it in the same sign; and we also have seen it near Spica Virginis, but with this advantage, that the telescopes, we made use of, make our observations incomparably more exact, than those of the ancients; who, for that purpose, made only
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use of their naked eye, always defective, at such a great distance, especially in respect of the stars, whose apparent diameter is augmented by the light, and by a kind of Coma of sparkling rays, according to the language of astronomers, that reflect from their whole body, which makes it many times appear where indeed it is not.

Whereas a good telescope makes them less glittering, rounds them, gives them their true bigness, and so approaches them to the eyes, that one does likewise distinguish them from one another, even when they touch one another at the edges, or borders, and when they are just upon uniting together.

Thus we determined the place of Mars, by the approaching of two stars of the Scorpion's head, that of the moon, by her conjunction with the Antares, or heart of the Scorpion, and that of Venus, that passed near a star of the third magnitude belonging to the same sign.

This conjunction of Jupiter and Mars, that happen'd about the end of February 1687, did also take up several days; we were at that time at Louveau, where the king of Siam, who took a pride in astronomy, did observe it in person with an earnestness and uneasiness, that shewed more of superstition than natural curiosity.

He had a fancy that this conjunction would be fatal to him, and that it was an assured prognostication of his death. We endeavour'd, but all in vain, to undeceive him, by M. Constance, his principal minister of state, whom we made apprehensive, that the events of this lower world have no communication with the particular motion of the planets; and, that altho' our destiny should depend thereon, yet the king was no more concern'd in it than the most abject of his subjects, for whom the

sun and the stars do as well turn round, as for the greatest potentate upon earth.

Nevertheless these reasons, nor abundance of others, could not set him to rights: he still maintain'd, that his reign was not to last long, and that he should be a dead man within a few days: in effect he died the next year; but it was in vain for him to seek for the cause of his death in the heavens, which he carried about him for several years; an habitual distemper did extremely trouble him at that very time; and that, without doubt, was the true ground of his fear and prediction.

I do not know, sir, whether or no these observations will appear singular and odd to you; yet methinks, this, at least, which I am going to have the honour of relating to you, does a little deserve your attention.

You know that Mercury hitherto hath been the least known, and (if I may so say) the least tractable of all the planets; always absorbed in the rays of the sun, or in the vapours of the horizon, he continually flies, it seems, all the courtings and caresses of astronomers, who are put to as much trouble to fix him in the heavens, as chymists are to fix their mercury upon earth.

We read in the life of Charlemagne, that the mathematicians of his times, despairing of ever being able to observe him well, when he was the farthest remote from the sun, endeavoured to find him in the sun itself, under which they suspected he might sometimes pass: they supposed they had there found him in the month of April 807, or rather 808, except the historian counted the beginning of the year at that time from Easter; in effect, a black spot appeared in the sun eight days, tho' his going in and coming out were hinder'd by a cloud.

I wonder

I wonder this observation could have been able to make them judge that this was Mercury, who is so far from spending eight days in running over such a little space, that he must, according to his natural course, finish it in a very few hours; besides that, it is utterly impossible for a man to perceive him in the sun, without the help of a telescope, and that too a very good one. What therefore they then saw, or supposed to see, was, without doubt, a spot, not unlike those that have so often appeared since, but bigger than ordinary, and conspicuous enough to be discover'd by the bare sight.

Gassendus was more fortunate, Anno 1631, on the seventh of November. The observation he made of it hath rendered him so famous, that some authors, to do him honour, have dedicated their books to him, as a person to whom astronomy was infinitely obliged; some others also have signaliz'd themselves by this curious disquisition; we are the last that have had occasion to imitate them, but our observation peradventure may not deserve the meanest esteem of all those which have been made.

We were at Canton, a maritime town of China, and pretty well known by the Europeans traffick; we applied ourselves to the particular studying of the motion of this planet, and that made us judge, that it would not be altogether impossible to discover it in the sun, on the tenth day of November 1690; to that end we prepared two excellent telescopes, the one of five feet, that bore a Reticula equal to the diameter, divided into twelve equal parts, and the other of twelve feet, with its Reticula composed of four threads, one whereof represented a parallel, the other the meridian, and the two others cut them at the angle of forty-five degrees; we also rectified our pendulums: besides all this, the heavens were exceeding clear and serene, and bating the wind, which

was a little violent, we could wish for nothing to the exactness of our observation.

Mercury appeared to us like a black point or speck, which, entering into the body of the sun, ^{pass} over it, in three hours and a half, or thereabouts; we exactly observed its time, entrance, departure, its distance from the ecliptick, its apparent swiftness, longitude and diameter. We understood likewise by that, with the greatest certainty in the world, that this planet hath no proper light of its own, that its body is opaque, and that it is, at least, sometimes less distant from us than the sun, the which could not formerly be determined but only by conjecture.

We owe, sir, these fine discoveries to the invention of optick-glasses and telescopes, as we do a great many other things, which in these latter ages are the subject of the new astronomy; so that as, by means of microscopes, we multiply the most simple bodies, and magnify the most minute and almost insensible ones; so likewise, by help of these telescopes, we approach to our eyes the most distant objects, and do abridge those infinite spaces that separate the firmament from the earth; art having in a manner forced nature to suffer men to have free commerce with heaven for time to come, and ~~let mathematicians~~ enter more easily into a kind of society with the stars.

We find, at present, mountains and precipices in the moon, we discern its least shadows, that increase or decrease, according to the different posture of the sun; we measure the Maculæ of planets, ~~we have~~ shrewd guesses of their colours, latitudes, and of their circular motion about their center. It is by that, that men have perceived that prodigious ring that appeared in the air, suspended about Saturn in form of a vault, or like a bridge, that would encompass the whole earth without arches, without piles, without any

in our age; support, besides the uniform weight, and perfect continuity of its parts.

Gallileo, and many other astronomers, have in vain put their brains on the rack to explain this mystery; they look'd upon this planet as another Proteus, always changing, always differing from itself; to day round, then oval, by and bye armed with two Ansa's or handles, that open or shut, according to the time of the revolution; or else accompanied with two little stars, that vaulted up and down without ever forsaking it: lastly, cut in the middle with a broad Fascia or swathing-band, whose extremities were extended far beyond its sphere.

We have a long time examined this wonderful work of the omnipotence of our Creator; and, notwithstanding we cannot but admire M. Hugen's ingenuity, who hath reduced to such a plain and facile System all these seeming irregularities, yet for all that, we must confess that we are ignorant of much more of it than that learned astronomer was able to discover to us.

It is less difficult to explain the different figures of Mars, Mercury, and Venus, which appeared to us sometimes round, sometimes gibbose, sometimes dichotomised, and ever and anon in fashion of a bow, or sickle; and the truth is, when Venus approaches the Sun, and when she is besides in her Perigæon, she appears in the telescope so little different from the next moon, that it is very easy for one to commit a mistake.

Remember, that causing a Chinese to observe it in this posture, who had but little skill in astronomical secrets, he did no longer doubt, but presently gave his assent; and making him at the same time take notice of the moon, at a place in the heavens not far remote, he cried out for joy, and told me then, that he now comprehended that

which had always perplex'd him : *I* ^{thing} to the
 says he seriously, *how the moon could change faces so*
often, and appear sometimes in the wax, and sometimes
in the wane; but now I perceive it is a body composed
of several parts, which sometimes are taken in pieces,
and then join'd together again after some certain times,
for to day, at least, I see one half of it on this side;
and one half on the other.

The knowledge also that we have acquired by
 telescopes, concerning the number of the ~~stars~~, is
 likewise more curious. That large Fascia that em-
 braces almost the whole heavens, which they com-
 monly call, for whiteness, the Milky-way, is a Con-
 geries of an infinite number of minute stars, each
 one of which, in particular, hath not strength enough
 to affect our eyes; no more can the Nebulosæ, whose
 dim and confused light is like to a little cloud, or
 head of a comet, yet it is compounded of several
 stars; so they reckon thirty-six of them in that of
 Præsepe Cancrî, twenty-one in that of Orion, forty
 in the Pleiades, twelve in the single star that makes
 the middle of the sword of Orion, five hundred in
 the extent of two degrees of the same constellation,
 and two thousand five hundred in the whole sign;
 which hath given occasion to some to imagine, that
 the number of them is infinite.

At least it is true, that the prodigious bigness of
 each star, which, according to some, differ but little
 from the sun; that is to say, whose globe is per-
 a thousand times bigger than that of the earth, which
 nevertheless appears but as a point in the heavens,
 ought to convince us of the vast extent of this uni-
 verse, and of the infinite power of its Author.

I cannot, sir, finish this discourse, before I have
 spoken of some observations we have made of the
 Satellites: these are so many little planets that be-
 long to the train of bigger ones, which were detected
 in

in our age, they continually turn about Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, &c. some nearer, and some farther off from the center of their motion, they sculk some times behind their body, sometimes again they are plunged into their shadow, from whence they come out more splendid, nay, it even happens, that when they are between the sun and their planet, they eclipse one part of it. I have sometimes beheld, with a great deal of delight, a black point, that run upon the disk of Jupiter, which one would have taken for a blemish, yet in effect was nothing else but the shadow of one of these Satellites, that caused an eclipse upon its globe, as the moon does upon the earth, when by her interposition she deprives it of the sun's light. We do not know for what particular use nature hath designed these Satellites in the heavens, but that, which we astronomers make use of them, is very useful for the perfection of geography. and since M. Cassini hath communicated his tables to the observators, one may easily, and in a very small time, determine the longitude of the principal cities of the world in so much that, if the irregular motion of ships would permit us to make use of the telescopes at sea, the science of navigation would be perfect enough to make long voyages with a great deal of safety.

We have observed the immersions and emersions of the Satellites Jovis at Sam, Loureau, Pontichery, the Cape of Good Hope, and in several cities of China, but the observations made at Nimpo and Chong, which are the most eastern cities, have reduced the great continent to its true limits, by cutting off above five hundred leagues from the country, that never subsisted but in the imagination of the ancient geographers.

Now, sir, I speak of what respects the perfection of geography, I shall tell you moreover, that we

have taken some pains to determine ~~things~~ to the coasts, ports, and the most considerable cities of the East, by two other methods. First, by a great number of observations about meridian altitudes of the sun and stars. Secondly, by divers maps and sea charts, that our voyages have given us occasion to invent or perfect. I have a Rutter, or directory, for finding out the course of a vessel from Nimp^o to Pekin, and from Pekin to Hamcheu, where we have omitted nothing that may any way contribute to the perfect knowing of the country, so that the particularities of it are in my opinion too large; nay, and even too troublesome to those, who, in these sorts of relations, do rather seek after delight than profit.

I have also by me the course of the rivers that lead from Nankin to Canton, it is the work of two or three months, and a tedious one too I'll assure you, when one would do things to purpose: the map is eighteen feet long, and each minute takes up above four lines, or the third part of an inch; so that all the bye ways, the breadth of the river, the smallest islands, and least cities are then exactly and accurately set down. We had always the seasons in our hand, and we always took care to observe, ever and anon upon the road, the meridian altitude of every particular star, to correct our estimate, and determine more exactly the latitude of the principal cities of the country.

Whereupon, sir, I cannot forbear making some reflections in this place, which may one day be useful perhaps for the resolving a material problem in physick. Men are not yet sure, whether all seas in the world be upon the level one with another. The generous principles of sound philosophy will have it, that all liquors of the same kind, that communicate one with another, do spread uniformly, whether

By

in our age, by the weight, or by the pression of the air; it take the same surface. Most of the experiments are in this point pretty congruous to reason; yet, some later reflections have started a doubt, whether or no the sea had not really some inclination, and were not more elevated in some certain places than in others. What I have remarked, touching the map I but now mentioned, seems to back this last opinion.

For, in the provinces of Canton and Kiamsi, is to be seen a mountain, out of which issue two rivers, the one flows toward the south, and, after it has watered fifty leagues of the country, it disimbuques into the sea near the city of Yamtcheu, the other flows contrary, viz to the north, crosses several provinces for the space of two hundred leagues, and turns aside insensibly, and enters into the east sea of Japan, insomuch that the emboucheurs or mouths of the two rivers are not distant from one another (if you do but even follow the coasts that separate them) above three hundred leagues or thereabouts.

Nevertheless, the northern river seems more rapid in its whole course, than that of the south, and being besides four times longer, it must needs be that the seas, where both of them meet, have a different elevation, or, which is the same thing, are not upon the self same level.

I shall not speak, sir, of several other maps, wherein we have reformed part of the coasts of Coromandel, of Pesehaze, Molucca, Mergui, and of Camboje, because they have not yet attained to that perfection, that we hope we may be able to give them hereafter. But yet I have two of them that at present may venture to come abroad, the one represents the entrance, or port of Nimpo, the most dangerous in the world, by reason of the multitude

titude of isles and rocks that cover it, ^{bring to the} and put the skilfullest pilots to a stand. ~~There are~~ subjoined thereto the course from Siam to China, with a prospect of the chief coasts, or isles ~~that are~~ not met with by the way.

The other is still more curious, and indeed the only one in its kind; the little occasion the Europeans have hitherto had to sail into the great Tartary, obliged geographers to make use, in their descriptions of it, of I know not what memorandums, so little consistent with truth, that, as far as I see, they have purposely set themselves to deprive us of the knowledge of it. But the war breaking out some years ago, between the emperor of China and the duke of Muscovy, they have on all sides diligently examined the limits of realms, the bigness of provinces, the fertility of lands, rivers, mountains, deserts, and whatsoever could any way be advantageous to these two provinces, and might conduce, in time to come, to conclude a solid and lasting peace between them.

Besides these memoirs that fell into father Gerbillon's hands, the father hath also taken several journeys of three or four hundred leagues into the very heart of the country; going sometimes towards the west, sometimes to the south, observing, as much as possibly could be, the longitude and latitude of the most remarkable places; so that the map, that he hath drawn out, begins at present to supply with a right idea of the disposition and situation of this vast country.

Amongst the things that are most singular in that country, one may observe a ridge of mountains that are extended so far into the sea between the east and north, that it hath been, to this day, almost impossible for mariners to know ^{kind double its cape,} ~~the situation~~ of Asia, ~~which makes some suspect, that the situation of Asia may be~~ peradventure

in our age, ~~it~~ be at this place contiguous to the firm land of America. We have, besides all this, made several observations concerning the variation of the need upon tides, upon the length of a single pendulum, ~~which~~ however contribute something to the perfection of arts and sciences.

• Ye these general observations have not so much taken up our time but that we have spared some to examine what there is in the East most curious, in ~~the~~ of natural philosophy, anatomy, and botany.

• Our sojourning at Siam afforded us an opportunity to view several particular animals, which we seldom or never see in Europe, as for example, the elephant, the nature of which we have described, as also its docibleness, strength, courage, dexterity, the interior and exterior contexture of all its parts, together with divers other properties, that the very people of that country, that are accustomed to them, cannot chuse but admire.

• There have we seen tigers, much different from those that are sometimes to be seen in France, and other countries, whether you look upon the colour, which is reddish fallow, interlaced with large black streaks, or whether you respect the bigness, which sometimes is equal to the bigness of horses, they call them Royal Tigers. • those they call Water Tigers do exactly resemble a cat. They live upon fish, do commonly live in woods, or upon the banks of rivers.

• There is likewise to be seen your rhinoceros's, one of the oddest animals in the world, in my opinion, it hath some resemblance with a wild boar, only it is a little bigger, the feet of it somewhat thicker, and the body more chaotically shaped, its hide is covered all over with thick large scales, of a blackish colour, of an extraordinary hardness they are divided into

into little squares or buttons, rising ^{up} to the of an inch above the skin, in a manner ^{more} of the crocodile; its legs seem to be engaged in a kind of boot, and its head wrapped about behind with a flat capuche, or monk's hood; which made the Portuguese to call him the *Indian Monk*: its head is thick and gross, its mouth not wide, its muzzle thrust out and armed with a long thick horn that makes him terrible to the very tigers, buffaloes, and elephants.

But that, which seems the most admirable in this animal, is its tongue, which nature hath covered with such a rough membrane, that it differs but little from a file, so that it fleas off the skin of all that it licks. In a word, as we see some animals here that make a good ragoust of thistles, whose little pricks tickle the fibres or the extremities of the nerves of the tongue; so likewise your rhinoceros takes delight in eating branches of trees, armed on all sides with stiff thorns: I have often given it some of them, whose prickles were very hard and long, and I admired how cunningly and greedily it bended them immediately, and champed them in its mouth without doing itself any harm. 'Tis true indeed, they sometimes drew blood of him, but that very thing made them more pleasant to the taste, and these little slight wounds made probably no other impression upon its tongue, than salt and pepper does upon ours.

What is to be seen, in the isle of Borneo, is yet more remarkable, and surpasseth all that ~~even the history~~ of animals hath hitherto related to be most admirable. The people of the country assure us, as a thing notoriously known to be true, that they find in the woods a sort of beast called the *Savage-man*, whose shape, stature, countenance, arms, legs, and other members of the body are so like ~~ours~~ that

the voice only, one should have not to reckon them equally men with certain Barbarians in Africa, who do not much differ from beasts.

This wild, or Savage-man, of whom I speak, is endued with extraordinary strength, and notwithstanding he walks but upon two legs, yet is he so swift of foot, that they have much ado to outrun him. People of quality course him as we do stags here, and this sort of hunting is the king's usual divertisement. His skin is all hairy, his eyes sunk in his head, his countenance stern and tanned; but all his lineaments are pretty proportionable, altho' harsh and thickened by the sun. I learned all these particulars from one of our chief French merchants, who hath remained some time upon the island; nevertheless, I do not believe a man ought to give much credit to such sorts of relations, neither must we altogether reject them as fabulous; but wait, till the unanimous testimonies of several travellers may more particularly acquaint us with the truth of it.

Passing up in a time from China to the coast of Coromandel, I did myself see, in the streights of Molucca, a kind of ape, that might make pretty credible that which I just now related concerning the Savage-man.

It marches naturally upon its two hind feet, which it bends a little, like a dog's that hath been taught to dance; it makes use of its two arms as we do; its visage is in a manner as well favoured as theirs of the Cape of Good Hope; but the body is all over covered with a white, black, or grey wool; as to the rest, it cries exactly like a child; the whole outward action is so human, and the passions so lively and significant, that dumb men can scarce express better their conceptions

ceptions and appetites. They do ^{cling to} to be of a very kind nature; and, to ⁱⁿ sections to persons they know and love, they embrace them, and kiss them with transports that surprize a man. They have also a certain motion, that we meet not with in any ^{very proper} beast, to children, that is, to make a noise with their feet for joy or spite, when one gives or ^{refuses} them what they passionately long for.

Altho' they be very big (for that I saw ^{was} at least four feet high) their nimbleness and flight is incredible: It is pleasure beyond expression to see them run up the tackling of a ship, where they sometimes play as if they had a particular knack of vaulting to themselves, or, as if they had been paid, like our rope-dancers, to divert the company.

Sometimes, suspended by one arm, they poise themselves for some time negligently to try themselves, and then turn, all on the sudden, round about a rope with as much quickness as a wheel, or a sling that is once put in motion; sometimes holding the rope successively with their long fingers, and letting their whole body fall into the air, ^{they run} full speed from one to the other, and come back again with the same swiftness. There is no posture but they imitate, nor motion but they perform; bending themselves like a bow, rolling like a bowl, hanging by the hands, feet, and teeth, according to the different fancies which their whimsical imagination supplies them with, which they act in the most diverting manner imaginable; but their agility to fling themselves from one rope to another, at thirty and fifty feet distance, is yet more surprising.

So likewise, that we might the oftener have this pastime, we caused five or six of our powder-monkeys, or cabin-boys trained up to this way of

climbing

By giving us the cords to follow them; then, our such prodigious capers, and slid with so much runningness along the masts, sail-yards, and recking of the ship, that they seemed rather to fly than run, so much did their agility surpass all that ever we have observed in other animals.

Crocodiles being little known in Europe, and so common in the Indies, it has been our care to examine their property and whole structure. Peradventure, sir, our former dissections will be of some use hereafter, for the project they laid, and carried on pretty far in the academy, for the perfecting of anatomy. We have added thereto some anatomical remarks accompanied with figures about the Tockates, so named, because they pronounce very frequently and distinctly this word. They are huge lizards or small crocodiles, found all over the woods in Siam, as also in the fields, and in houses.

The cameleon is likewise another sort of lizard of between eight and ten inches in length, which served for a subject to our observations; there are of them to be seen upon the coast of Coromandel, and we breed of them at our house in Pontichery, for they do not live upon air alone, as some naturalists have written, for they eat, and that very greedily. 'Tis true indeed, that, being of a very cold and moist temper, they can pass several days without aliment; but at the long-run, if you give them none at all, you shall see them dwindle away by degrees, and at last die for hunger.

Upon the whole, every thing is very odd in the cameleon, its eyes, head, and belly are exceeding big; and altho' it hath four parts, as a lizard, yet is it so very slow in all its motions, that it crawls rather than goes; and, if nature had not bestowed upon it

a tongue of a particular contexture, it especially ever catch the animals, in which does consist its nourishment: this tongue is round, thick, and at least a foot in length, it darts this tongue seven or eight inches out of its mouth with a marvellous slight: now the substance of it is so viscous, that it detains flies, grasshoppers, and other such like insects, if it touch them but never so lightly with its tip.

Its body is cover'd all over with a very fine skin but is of a changeable colour, according to the various passions that agitate it: in joy it is of an emerald green mix'd with orange, etched with little grey and black strokes; choler makes it dusky and livid; fear pale, and of a faded yellow: by times all these colours, and many more, are confounded together, and at times there's compos'd such a pretty medley of shade and light, that nature does not afford a finer variety of shadowing, nor our finest pictures more lively, sweet, and proportional drawing.

They let me see likewise at Pontichery two other kinds of animals little known in Europe; the one is called Chien marron, that takes after the dog, wolf, and fox almost equally: it is of an indifferent bigness, the hair is grey and reddish, its snout taper'd ears, the snout sharp, the leg high, a long tail, a body slender and well shaped; it does not bark like dogs, but cries just as infants do: in a word, it is naturally voracious, and, when hunger pinches it, it enters into houses in the night, and falls upon people.

The second sort is the Mangoure, which, as to its exterior shape, comes very near the werze, except only that its body is longer and bigger, the legs shorter, the snout slenderer, the eye quicker, and somewhat less wild.

This animal really is very familiar, and there is no dog that plays and favours more prettily with a man.

man thing or creature, nevertheless it is angry, and not to be trusted when it eats, always snarling at that time, and falls furiously upon those who will be troubling it.

It loves hens eggs more than any thing; but, because its chops are not wide enough to seize on them, it strives to break them by throwing them aloft, or by rolling them an hundred ways upon the ground; but, if there chance to be a stone in its way, it presently lies upon it with its face downward, and, striding with its hinder legs, it takes the egg in its fore legs, and thrusts it with all its might under its belly, till it be broken against the stone.

It does not only hunt rats and mice, but serpents, to whom it is a mortal enemy, which it takes by the head so cunningly, that it receives no hurt by it. It is at no less enmity with cameleons, which at the very sight of it are seized with so mortal a fear, that they become immediately as flat as a flounder, and fall down half dead, whereas at the approach of a cat, or dog, or some other more terrible animal, they swell, are enraged, and betake themselves either to their own defence, or to assault them.

India being a very hot country, and withal moist, produces a great number of other animals; there is there especially abundance of serpents of all sizes, and so pretty in respect of the variety of colours, that, if it were not for the natural antipathy that we have for this kind of beast, I scarce know any thing that the eye could take greater delight in. The people of Sam are not so nice as we in this respect; they catch a prodigious number of them in the woods, and expose them to sale in the markets like cels.

Yet there is a particular kind of them that they do not eat, they are present poison, and that without relief, they call them Cobra capela some others

are short, and of a triangular form, so that they always creep upon one of their three faces; others also are still more odd, have no tail, their extremities are terminated by two heads exactly alike in appearance, but very different in effect, inasmuch as the one hath not, as the other, the common use of its organs; for in these latter the lips are join'd, the ears stopp'd, the eye-lids quite cover the eyes, whilst the other eats, sees, hears, and guides all the rest of the body.

Yet an Englishman at Madras, who kept one in his house for curiosity sake, assured me, that every six months the organs of this second head disclosed by little and little, and that, on the contrary, those of the opposite head, by closing themselves, ceased to perform their ordinary functions; that at the end of the like number of months, they were both restored to their pristine state, and divided in that manner between them, each in its turn, the care and government of the machine.

But God being no less wonderful in the least things than he is in the greatest, there are a prodigious number of insects that might deserve the most serious reflections. There you may see certain flies that nature hath painted of such a lively yellow, so polish'd and shining, that the most curious gilding does not come near it. Some others are but points of light, that always glow, and emit rays all night long; all the air appears as if set on fire with it when they fly; and, when they light upon leaves or branches, the trees resemble, afar off, those fire-works they make in the Indies for solemn illuminations.

Their white pismires, every where to be found, what care soever men take to destroy them, are very famous by reason of the great inconveniences they produce, and for their natural properties; they are exceeding small, of a soft substance, white, and sometimes

sometimes a little ruffety ; they are multiplied ad infinitum ; and, whensoever they are once got into a house or apartment, nothing but the black pismires can drive them out ; they have such sharp teeth, and so penetrating, that they not only pierce through ; in one night, the greatest bails, cloth, wool, silk, and all other stuffs, but even cabinets and cupboards, the wood of which becomes in a few days all worm-eaten ; they even spoil wood, copper, and silver, upon which you may sometimes discern the signs and marks of their little teeth : notwithstanding all this, there is great probability that this effect proceeds more from the particular quality of the Saliva, which is a kind of dissolving Menstruum, and acts at that time much after the same manner as *Aqua fortis* does there upon our metals.

Even the grasshoppers are extraordinary ; there are some of them in Siam that breed upon the boughs of trees, and are, if I may venture to say so, their fruit in a manner ; for the leaves, preserving their natural figure and colour, grow somewhat thicker, their sides throw out on each hand a kind of green filaments, in fashion of long legs, one of the extremities of the leaf extends like a tail, and the other waxes round like a head, all which, at length, is animated, and metamorphosed into a grasshopper : this is what the people of the country report, who pluck them from the branches themselves ; we have seen great store of them, and it is true that the leaf appears intire with its fibres, or at least nothing does more resemble a leaf than the body of this animal. If this be true, this tree is no less to be wonder'd at than that whose leaves dropping into the sea, in a short time, turn to *Salad geese*, as some naturalists would make us believe.

It would here be a fit place to speak to you concerning the strange trees we have met with in the East ;

but, if I am not mistaken, I have had formerly the honour to discourse with you about them at large, especially of those that produce varnish, tea, cotton, tallow, pepper, and many others, all of them singular in their kind, and very profitable for commerce

I have had also the honour, sir, to present you with about four hundred China plants, drawn out in their natural colours, and copied after those that are kept in the closet of the emperor of China. This is it that does chiefly compose the herbal of China, and which, doubtless, will enrich ours, especially when we shall have the translation of the book where the vertues and use of all these simples are incomparably well explained

Neither shall I enlarge more upon our observations that relate to the beauty, bigness, and diversity of Indian birds, for, altho' that may be the finest part of the history of animals, yet there has been so much said of it already in the foregoing relations, that it would be to no purpose to speak to you of it more at large

But I cannot forbear now in the conclusion to relate to you the greatest curiosities which the sea hath furnished us with. There are fish, whose blood is as hot as that of a man, others respire as the air like other terrestrial animals, we see some of them fly like birds, that croak at the bottom of waters like toads, and bark like dogs. Some have heads pretty like ours, they call them in Siam, Mermaids in some certain ones the flesh is so firm, that it nourisheth as much as meat, in others, it is so soft, that it may not so properly be called fish, as an indigestedness of slimy, gross, and transparent matter, wherein no organ is to be discerned, yet is it quick, it moves, and even swims methodically. In a word, altho' the most part of them be good to eat, yet I have seen some that are poisonous, which
infallibly

infallibly lame the fishermen when they can strike their fins into them

I forbear all the other wonders of the sea, that no ways come short of those in the heavens and in the earth, that I may speak more particularly of what we have learned of the birth, nature, and fishing of pearl. You may assure yourself, that these are of that kind of description upon which the publick may rely, for we derive them from the fountain head. This is what father Bouchet, the missionary of Madure, sent by the King into the Indies, left me his own self in writing

Men know well enough, that pearls are engendered in a sort of oyster found in the Indies, between cape Comarin and the channel de la Croux, which occasioned the giving the name de la Pêcherie, or the Fishery to the whole coast. This fishing is exceeding chargeable, whether it be that it continues three whole months without any intermission, or whether it be that they are sometimes forced to employ above an hundred and fifty men therein all at once, so that, before they engage in it for good and all, they begin upon trial, from whence they can tell, more or less, what profit they may possibly hope for.

Now, if the pearls of the first oyster be fair, big, and in great number, then the whole body of fishers are in readiness against the 15th of March, the time when the Paravas (people of that coast) do always begin that precious fishing. In the last, there are but eight hundred barques, yet sometimes there are to be seen to the number of three thousand. At that time the Hollanders arm two pataches, to convoy the fleet, and defend them from pirates.

The crew of each barque consists of fifty or sixty mariners, amongst whom there are twenty divers, each of which hath his two assistants, which for that reason they call the Fisher Assistants. In fine, the gun is distributed after the following manner, each

Diver is bound to pay six crowns to the Hollanders, which hath sometimes amounted to a million Every eight days, they fish one whole day for the profit of the skipper of the barque, the first throw of the nets is for him, they give the third part of what remains to the assistants, and the surplus belongs to the divers, but yet, the Hollanders do not always give them leave to dispose of it as they please So that these poor wretches do often complain of their hard fate, and bewail their loss, when they think of the time they lived under the dominion of the Portuguese

When fishing time is come, this is the manner of the Parivas's preparing themselves for it The whole fleet puts out to sea as far as seven, eight, or ten fathom water, off of certain huge mountains, which they discover far up in the country, they have learned by experience, that this is the most commodious latitude of the coast, and the place where there is the most copious fishing

Soon after casting anchor, every diver fastens under his belly a good big stone six inches diameter, a foot long, cut archwise on that side which is applied to his skin, they make use of it as ballast, that they may not be carried away by the motion of the water, and to go more firmly through the waves, but it is that, they tie a second heavy one to one of their feet, that presently sinks them to the bottom of the sea, from whence they quickly draw it into the barque by help of a small cord but because the divers are often fixed to the rocks, they surround their fingers with copper plates for fear of hurting them in pulling the cisterns with violence some others also use iron forks for the same purpose

Lastly, every diver carries a great net, is furnished with a scull, about his neck is a long rope, the end of which is fastened to the side of the barque, the scull is designed to receive the vessels they pick up

up during the fishing, and the rope to draw up the fishers when they have filled their sack.

In this equipage they precipitate themselves, and go down into the sea above sixty feet deep. Since they must lose no time, so soon as they touch the bottom, they run to and fro upon the sand, upon a slimy earth, and amongst the craggy rocks, snatching hastily the oysters they meet with in their way.

At what depth soever they be, the light is so great that they discern what happens in the sea, as easily as tho' they were upon land. They sometimes see monstrous fish, from which the christians defend themselves by crossing themselves, which hitherto hath preserved from all accidents. For, as for those who are Mahometans or Pagans, whatsoever shift they make by troubling the water, or flying away, to avoid them, many have been devoured by them, and of all the dangers in fishing, this is, without all doubt, the most ordinary and greatest.

In fine, the expert divers remain commonly under water half an hour, others are no less than a good quarter of an hour. They do no more but hold their breath, without using, for that purpose, either oil, or any other liquor; custom and nature having endued them with that power, which all the art of philosophers hath not been able to discover.

cise without respite, for they feed but twice a day, once in the morning, before they put to sea, and in the evening when night forces them to make to shore.

It is upon this shore where they unload all the barques, and the oysters are carried into a great many little pits digged into the sand, about five or six feet square. The heaps they throw in rise sometimes to the height of a man, and look like a company of little huts, that one would take at a distance for an army ranged in battalia.

They leave the oysters in this manner, till such time as the rain, wind, or sun, forces them to open of themselves, which soon kills them, the meat corrupts and grows dry, and they pull out the pearls very easily, so that they all fall into the pit. According as they pull out the mother of pearl, so they call the shells, on the outside like those of your common oysters, but within more like silver, and more glittering. The largest are near as big as your hand, the meat is very delicate, and, if the pearls there found be, according to the opinion of some physicians, certain stones, that are bred by the ill constitution of the oyster's body, as it happens in men, and in the bezour, this distemper does not sensibly alter the humours thereof, at least the Persians, that eat of them, find not any difference between those that have pearls, and those that have none.

When they have cleansed the ditch of its most gross filth, they sift the same over and over again, to separate the pearls from it. Nevertheless, what care soever they take, abundance of them are lost, and, altho' they return often thither, yet they still find them, in a pretty considerable number, some years after the fishing.

And this is all, sir, that respects the place, and ordering of this rich fishing. I shall add some other particulars,

particulars, that will serve more fully to inform you of the nature and quality of pearls

• They are found scattered here and there in the whole substance of the oyster, in the veil that covers it, in the circular muscles that terminate there in the ventricle, and, in general, in all the carnos and muscular parts, so that it is not probable that they be in the oyster, what the eggs are in the hen, and spawn in fish for besides, that nature hath not determined them any particular place for to be formed in, anatomists, who have carefully examined this matter, can discover nothing that hath any analogy with that which happens in respect of other animals

• One may, nevertheless, say, that whereas there are in a pullet an infinite number of eggs in form of seed, one of which grows and alights, whilst the others remain in a manner in the same state so likewise in each oyster may be commonly observed one pearl bigger, better formed, which sooner comes to perfection than all the rest But this pearl hath no fixed place, and it is sometimes in one place, and sometimes in another Yea, and it sometimes so falls out, that this pearl becomes so big, that it hinders the mother of pearl to close, and then the oyster dies and corrupts

• The number of the pearls is no less indefinite, ofentimes all the meat of the oyster is set thick with them, but it is a rare thing to find more than two of them of any tolerable bigness

• They are naturally white, more or less according to the quantity of the mother The yellow and the black are extraordinary rare, and of small value, yet Tavernier reports, that he had six of them given him in the Indies that were perfectly black, resembling jet, and much esteemed in the country If this author doth not intend to impose upon us in this point, as he doth in many others, perhaps he was deceived

deceived himself: however, it is most certain, that, all along the coast of La Pescherie, they make no account of them; and the fishermen themselves throw them away, as good for nothing.

This variety of colours is, without doubt, caused in the pearls, by the different parts of the oyster where they are formed; so that when chance or nature hath directed the seed into the mesentery and liver, or, rather into the parts that are instead of them: (For there hath been observed in an oyster a cavity large enough, where are discovered two overtures, that terminate at two small membranes, where the chyle is chiefly purified, and discharges itself of all its gross particles; the intestines of this animal not being accompanied with lacteal and mesariac veins.) When, I say, the part is inclosed in these cavities, and bile and impurities of the blood may very well alter the natural whiteness, and make them either yellow or black, so likewise one may observe, that these pearls are not transparent, but sullied, and laden with a gross substance.

As to what relates to their exterior form, it is sufficiently known, seeing they are as common in Europe as in the Indies. Their different figure gives them different names; so we say, a pearl in point, or in pear; oval pearl, round pearl, baroque pearl, that is, flat on one side and round on the other; one may add irregular pearl; for some of them are found with many little angles, gibbous, flat, and generally in all sorts of figures.

Upon the whole, if it be a difficult thing to give an account how pearls grow in oysters, it is no less difficult to understand the manner how oysters are generated in the sea. Some say it isres with this sort of fish as with all others, that produce eggs, the exterior substance whereof, soft at first, and viscous, grows hard at last by degrees, and turns to a shell.

WHD:

What the Paravas have observed, and which I will inform you, deserves to be carefully minded

• At the times when rain falls, the brooks of the adjacent lands, that empty themselves all along the West, flow near two leagues upon the surface of the sea, without mixing with it. This water does thus swim above some time, keeping its natural colour, but it clots afterwards by the heat of the sun, which reduceth it into a kind of light transparent cream. Soon after it is divided into an infinite number of parts, every one of which seems animated, and moves up and down like so many little insects. The fish sometimes catch some of them as they float, but as soon as they taste of them they quickly leave them.

Of what nature soever these minute animals may be, certain it is, that they engender upon the surface of the water, their skin grows thick, hard, and becomes last of all so ponderous, that they descend by their own proper weight to the bottom of the sea. The Paravas do moreover assure us, that they assume at last the form of an oyster.

• This is a system whereof the virtuoso's did probably never dream, which experience hath discovered to the Barbacons, and, in effect, it is in these places only that pearl is found, and the rainiest years prove likewise the best for fishing.

• I shall add moreover, to undeceive those who are wedded to that opinion of the ancients, that oysters remain always at the bottom of the sea. Formerly it was believed they rose every morning up to the surface of the water, and that they open'd their valves, or shell, to receive in the dew of heaven, which, like a melted pearl, insinuated itself into the meat of the oyster, was fix'd by means of its salts, and there at last assumed the colour, figure, and hardness of pearls, not much unlike some certain liquors.

liquors that are transmuted into crystals in the earth, or as some flowers are transformed into honey and wax in the bee-hives: all this is ingenious and pretty; but the worst of it is, 'tis all false; for these oysters are strongly fastened to the rock, and never did any fisher see one to float upon the superficies of the water.

Notwithstanding pearls are found in several places, yet those of La Pescherie are the most valued, for they never lose their lustre; others turn yellow, or of a pale decayed white. ~~As to~~ the true value, it is very hard to determine any thing for certain, the biggest of all, that was found in the last fishing, was sold but at six hundred crowns.

I have sometimes asked the divers, if they did not now and then find coral at the bottom of the sea; they answered, that they, being for the most part busied in what concerns seeking for pearls, took no great notice of any thing besides; that, nevertheless, they found, from time to time, branches of black coral: there is some of it, added they, which altho' it be pretty hard at the bottom of the water, yet becomes much more so, when it hath been some time exposed to the air: but the greatest part of it hath acquir'd, even in the sea, all its natural hardness. It sticks fast to the rocks, and when we cast anchor in foggy weather, it often happens that our anchor catches hold on some branches of black coral, and brings along with it whole trees; but it is very rare to find any red coral all along the coast of La Pescherie.

I shall here make a reflection that not many have made, viz. That the coral-tree hath no root: some of it was shown in Rome, in father Kercher's Museum, that sprung out of several stones; some of them have been after that pick'd away, and the coral had not only no root, but was not so much as tied
by

by any fibre, or any the least filament whatsoever. There also were seen several branches of coral issuing from a nacre of pearl, and in cardinal Barbarin's closet, there is still to be seen a shrub of coral, whose foot is black, the trunk white, and the very top of all red.

Thus doth nature, sir, disport herself in the great abyss, as well as in the other parts of the universe, by the production of prodigious numbers of things equally profitable and precious, which she bestows not to excite and incite mens concupiscence, or to augment their sottish pride, but to serve them for ornaments, as reason, and the decency of every state requires or permits

May, perhaps, sir, these beauties of the universe were created, not so much to adorn the body, as to exercise the mind. *Reliquit mundum disputationi eorum.* For, of all natural pleasures, the most innocent, and *abstract*, without all doubt is the study of nature, and the consideration of the marvels it contains in its womb. When one hath once run over the ground *work* of divine wisdom, and penetrated into the mysteries of it, this general view of so many beauties hath more powerful charms, and begets in our spirit a more affecting and affecting image and representation, than all that the senses and passions are ever able to present to us.

You know it, sir, better than any body; you, I say, who by your particular study, and your continual correspondence with the learned, have acquir'd, in so short time, so many notions in all the different kinds of erudition; and certainly, that constant application that you every day afford, in reference to the perfection of arts and sciences, sufficiently declares, that nothing can more profitably and pleasurably take up the time of a gentleman and honest man.

But

But what is still more singular, you sanctify all this knowledge, by the good improvement you make of it: you bring it, I may so say, to the sanctuary; you make use of it in the pulpit of truth, to make our mysteries more intelligible, and, not satisfied with the ordinary philosophy and eloquence, you do thereby become a christian philosopher, and an evangelical orator. I am, with all respect,

S^r R,

Your most humble

and most obedient Servant;

F I N I S





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